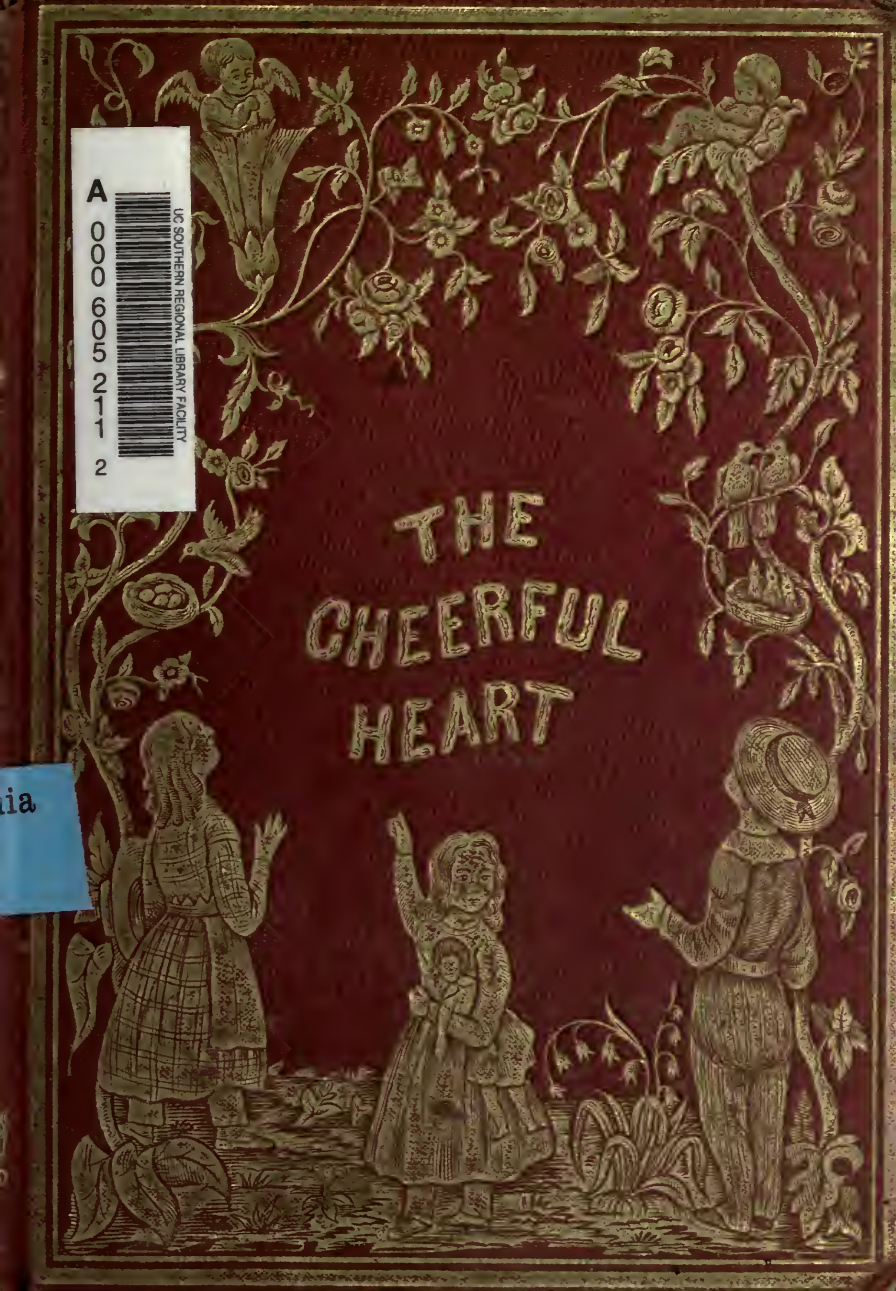

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Ellen M Paige
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to her by his father

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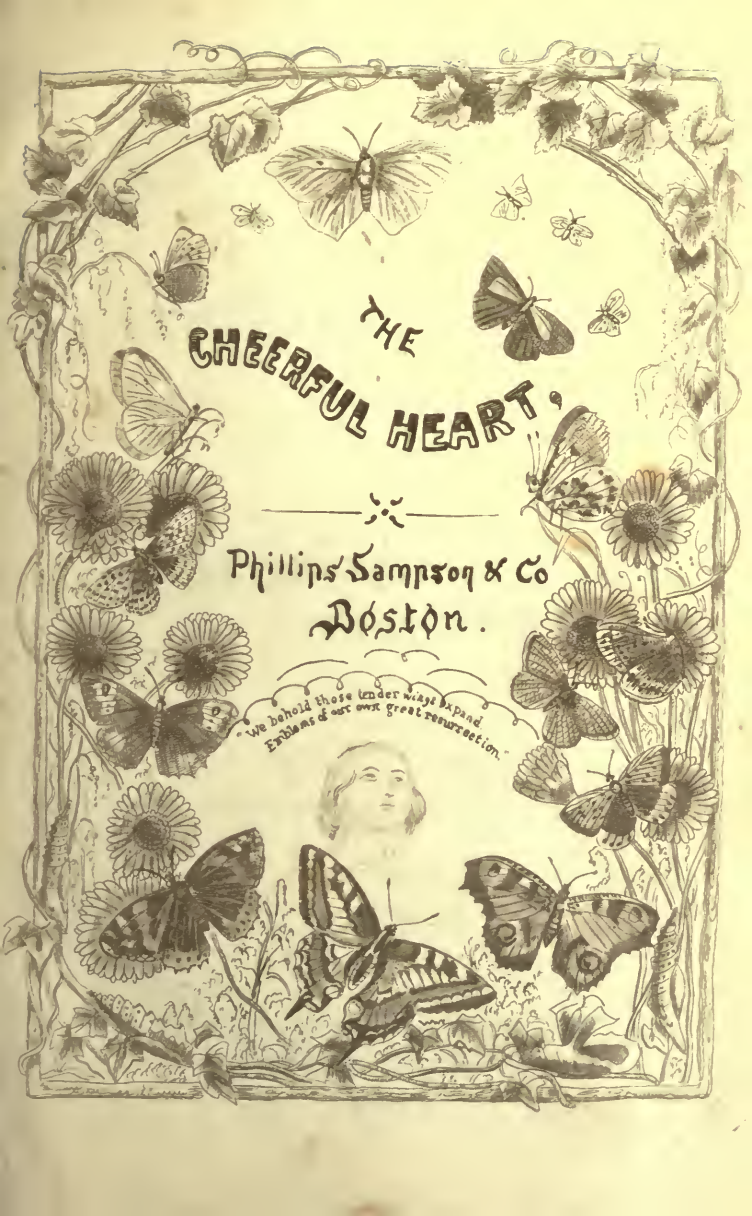
THE
CHEERFUL HEART,
Phillips Sampson & Co
Boston.
"We behold those tender wings expand
Emblems of our own great resurrection."

THE

CHEERFUL HEART;

OR,

"A SILVER LINING TO EVERY CLOUD."

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

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CHAPTER I.

DAISY VALLEY AND ITS INHABITANTS.

Ah, such a sweet place was Daisy Valley, nestled among the hills which seemed to shut it in from the rest of the world, with its "cark and care." From beyond the mountains there stole out a stream which gently wound itself among the grand old trees which skirted its banks. Its waters were so clear that the pebbles far down in its bosom could be distinctly seen. The whole surface of the valley, from the river to the blue hills which encircled it, was carpeted with soft, green grass, which looked like velvet of the finest texture; and all about this the bright-eyed daisies peeped up from their

hiding-places, and gave to the valley its name. They were no common daisies, but were far more beautiful than those which reared themselves amid the far-off fields and thoroughfares of the noisy world beyond. And, now and then, amid these daisies a cottage could be seen, with a neat garden in front, and as many trees as could be made to grow around it; for trees were sacred things in that valley, and much time was devoted to their culture. Even the dead ones remained standing, and over them vines were trained, which concealed their unsightliness. Many flowers, besides their favorite daisy, were cultivated by the dwellers in the valley; for they looked upon these "stars of earth" as ministers from heaven, speaking of the love and goodness of their Maker. Sweet human flowers bloomed here also, and, with their loveliness, cheered the saddened heart, and bade it look up to Him who never willingly afflicts, but is always ready to pour upon the sufferer the balm of consolation.

There were, perhaps, twenty cottages in the valley, inhabited by a people who dwelt in love one with another. They had learned to be happy in doing as they would be done by, and in this way their time passed profitably and agreeably to themselves and to those around them. They were not always, however, such a contented community, for the time had been when the cottages, now so smiling and lovely, were neglected, and tall, rank weeds grew where beauteous flowers now oped their petals to the morning sun. But a mighty change fell upon that valley, and where once wildernesses of unsightly shrubs grew, groves of lovely trees sprang up, whose slender stems bent gracefully towards the sunlight which gave brightness and health to the valley; and gentle rivulets watered the roots of those trees as they glided into the river which flowed onward to its ocean home. But how was all this brought about? Through the influence of one cheerful, loving heart. This may seem impossible to the reader without faith;

but to those who possess this heavenly quality, the change which took place in the Valley of Daisies will cause not a doubt to arise in their hearts, but will only strengthen them in their belief that faith with works can achieve wonders.

But to my story. In one of the largest and prettiest cottages nestled among those oaks, whose towering heads seem to reach the sky, dwelt the principal character which will figure in these pages. His is no tall and commanding person, with dignified air and bearing, or voice whose trumpet tones could cause the hills which surrounded the valley to reëcho its notes, but a gentle boy of twelve years, whose flaxen curls and mild blue eyes, together with a light and graceful, but feeble, frame, seemed to speak painfully of the slight hold he had upon earth. But within that delicate tenement dwelt a spirit so beautiful and so strong, that all grew better as they listened to the words which fell from those guiltless lips. Arthur Burton was

the son of a widow, who, when her husband died, felt that but for her children (Arthur, and a little sister too young to realize her loss) she should have sunk under her severe trials. She was comparatively a stranger in a strange land, for she was born beneath the skies of Italy, and after the death of her husband she sighed for her own beloved home, and for her mother, who yet mourned for her only child, who had left her to share a stranger's home and heart in a distant land.

Captain Burton was one of those noble men who seem to grow better and purer by mixing with a world in which so much of evil dwells. He possessed an excellent disposition and a superior mind, which had been cultivated by his parents, who had early sown there seeds which in after life grew and brought forth much fruit. The same disease had swept them both to the grave in his early youth; but he never forgot their counsels, or made light of their reproofs. They left him a small fortune, which he had in-

creased by the business which he had chosen — that of a sailor. He was greatly beloved by his companions for his frank, noble qualities, which would always induce him to share his last crust with any person in want. When he became master of a vessel, more were eager to sail with him than he could employ; and although he always maintained proper discipline, yet his men knew that he was right, and would have laid down their lives for him at any time. In one of his voyages up the Mediterranean, he left his ship at a safe port, under the care of his mate, and made an excursion to the lovely Bay of Naples, and to Vesuvius, which he had a great desire to see in a state of eruption. His wish was gratified; yet he lingered, for a sweet human plant claimed his attention and won his love.

Marianna Ladoni was worthy the affection of the young captain, and was every way his equal in excellence. She loved the beautiful bay, by whose side she had always dwelt; very dear to her were her mother and her old and faithful

nurse, who had petted her from her birth, and who, as she had arrived at woman's estate, was so proud of her beauty; yet she loved the young stranger better than all, and she had cheerfully promised to share his home beneath colder skies, and to change her sweet sounding Italian name for one less musical. Yes, Marianna left her home, but she sighed not; for he whom she prized above all others was with her, and she was happy. She knew that he was worthy, and it is "such happiness to the pure to love." For a few years "Time trod on flowers" with the wedded pair. Two lovely children were given them, and in rearing these tender plants their happiness seemed perfect. Captain Burton had accumulated sufficient to afford them an ample support; he had given up his business, and the united family bade fair to pass many years of usefulness together. But alas! how uncertain are all earthly things! sickness came, and the strong man bowed before it. All that science could do was done; but the command had gone

forth, and that husband and father, touched by the icy finger of Death, slept the sleep which knows no waking. Ere he died he had selected the spot in the beautiful Valley of Daisies (as he had named it) where he had commenced the cottage which his widow now occupied. One day when visiting this place, himself and wife, upon observing the state of the inhabitants, had resolved to remove there, and by their influence and example to strive to improve a people who lived in the midst of all that could render life desirable, so far as beauty of situation and fertility of soil was concerned. Before Captain Burton died, he called Arthur to his side, and entreated him to carry out his plans. The child looked upon his dying parent, and with his whole soul in his eyes made the promise which, although so young, he perfectly understood. There had always been something remarkable about the boy, who, with his fragile frame and lovely expression of countenance, had seemed but half of earth. The father died, and those children had been an in-

expressible comfort to the lone mother. Mrs. Burton had removed to the cottage in the valley, and the little family had dwelt there two years when this story commences. At first the solitude of her new home was almost insupportable; her heart was desolate; and not until her conscience upbraided her for resigning her children to the care of strangers did she strive to arouse herself from her deep sorrow.

One day Arthur came to her, and said, in his sweet, childish way, "Come, dear mother; Netty and I have found some of those flowers with bright blue blossoms, which father loved so well, and this nice boy" — alluding to a very ragged little urchin by his side — "has been helping me to set them out; and after you have looked at them, I am going with him to assist in making a garden, where he can have some flowers too. I thought you would give us some seeds, and by and by his garden will look as well as ours."

Mrs. Burton could not deny the request of her son, and she was agreeably surprised at the pains

he had taken and the improvement he had made in order to gratify her, and to take off her attention from the grief which had wholly absorbed her thoughts. "Dear mother," said Arthur, "do not look so sad; you must remember the story which you read to Annette and me one day, which said that there was 'a silver lining to every cloud.' Father is an angel in heaven now; and if he knows what is passing here, it must make him miserable to see you unhappy. Do try to be cheerful. I try; and when tempted to weep for pa, I think I shall one day go to him, and be with him forever; and that 'silver lining' comforts me."

These artless words induced Mrs. Burton to feel that she had been very selfish in her grief; and giving him such a look as only a fond mother can give to the child of her love, she replied, "I will be more cheerful, my boy. I know it is wrong to thus mourn as one without hope."

From this time she began to improve in health and spirits. The influence of the sweet "summer

time" had a soothing effect upon her stricken heart. She could not be insensible to the loveliness of the spot which her husband had chosen for her residence, and in instructing her children and assisting them in their out-door pursuits she gained strength and peace. With her own hands she planted flowers, trained honeysuckles and woodbine over the doors and windows, and by thus keeping her mind constantly occupied, she found but little time to dwell upon her sorrows. In her rambles in the fine woods which covered the gently-sloping hills, her children always accompanied her, and it was a delight to her to lead their youthful minds up the hill of science. Mrs. Burton had read much with her husband; and now she found the great value and advantage of such a course. Arthur's constantly inquiring mind obliged her to keep up her reading, and even the little Annette frequently asked questions which required thought and research to answer.

"Are you happy now, mamma?" said Arthur to

his mother, as, with a smile upon her lips, she watched the gambols of a pet Maltese cat, which was greatly prized by Annette.

"Yes, my son," replied the mother, "thanks to your favorite saying, that there is 'a silver lining to every cloud:' in looking for it, and in striving to perform my duties, I have found cheerfulness and content, though the 'loved and lost' can never be forgotten. My life was once a very selfish one."

"Dear mother, you wrong yourself; for you always made father happy, as he said before he died."

"If I added to his enjoyment, Arthur, I do not deserve praise for it. I have naturally a cheerful disposition; fortune had always smiled upon me; and it was no effort for me to make myself agreeable. The heart can only be proved by privations and sorrows, which are often necessary, and wisely sent to show to us and those around us what we are, and of what we are capable. The loss of your father was an over-

whelming blow to me; but I can now see the mercy even of that bitter trial."

"I am so glad you have found the 'silver lining,' mamma," said Arthur; "and Charley Afton's mother is finding it too, for she told me this afternoon that although she had the rheumatism so badly in her feet that she could not walk, yet she had 'come to think' that, if she had lost the use of her hands too, Charley would have to go without stockings, and there would be nobody to mend his clothes either. 'And,' said she, 'Mr. Afton, who has had to work so hard all his days that he could not find time even to patch up the house, since I have told him what you said about the cloud, begins to get a peep at its silver edge, and says that by hurrying a little more, instead of stopping to talk with the men at the shop about his troubles, he can get time to do many things which I had to go without until lately. O, that "silver lining" and a cheerful heart are blessed things, Arthur.'"

"Now, mother, I want you to go and see Mrs.

Afton with me, after I have said my lessons to-morrow. Will you?"

"I should be glad to know more about Charley's mother, and I will cheerfully comply with your request."

"Thank you, mamma. Mrs. Afton will praise me to you for the trifles I have been able to do for her and Charley; but you will know that the poor woman has not been accustomed to kindness, and she thinks a great deal of a small favor."

"I shall appreciate what she says, my child," replied Mrs. Burton, as with a tear in her eye she looked at her noble boy, whose modest face was suffused with blushes by this allusion to his own good deeds. At the same time that mother breathed a prayer that she might not love her child too well, and forget the hand which had bestowed him upon her.

Well might a parent be proud of such a child. Lovely from his birth, thoughtful beyond his years, seeming to comprehend at once each per-

son's troubles, and to know intuitively just how to soothe, and exactly what was best adapted for them; forbearing and long suffering for himself, but sensitive as the eye of love for others; ever ready to mourn with those who mourned, yet urging them to hope on, and repeating his beloved saying, which, with his cheerful tones, seldom failed to comfort the sorrowing and calm the wounded, — The poor worshipped him, and the rich hailed his coming. His own happy feelings and bright smiles seemed to be reflected from the countenances of those with whom he associated, and difficulties which they had considered insurmountable vanished at his coming. His pleasant "Let us try" generally removed the mountain, "I cannot," and placed the lever at the right spot, so that the obstacle was soon surmounted. But notwithstanding this, he was so modest, so unpretending, and thought so little of his own good acts, that the favor became doubly precious from the way in which it was conferred.

The next day, as she had promised, Mrs. Burton called upon Mrs. Afton, who very gratefully expressed her thanks for the favors she had received from Arthur. Said she, "I was the most miserable person in the world before he came to see me. Unable to walk a single step, I thought of nothing but my trials, and by constantly dwelling upon them I made them much greater than they really were. By my repinings and complaints, I drove my husband from my presence; and after he returned home from a hard day's work, instead of striving to make him comfortable, I only scolded him for not sympathizing more with me. To escape this he fled to the alehouse, and although once a very temperate man, he soon could drink as much as the worst drunkard of the set. Of course, this added to my misery; and what was more bitter than all the rest, my boy, my Charley, was influenced to treat me with disrespect. My cup of sorrow was now full, for he had always been a good, affectionate child; but instead of striving to

win him back to me, I only by reproaching him, drove him still farther from me. This cottage which you see, madam, is so delightfully situated, and begins now to look like old times, was going to ruin for the want of a little care. In place of glass in the casements, they were filled with old hats and rags. The garden, once in perfect order, had run to waste, and instead of flowers nothing but weeds and rank grass grew there, and the sweet little place which my father left me could never have been recognized in the miserable hovel of a few months since. But thanks to your blessed boy, madam, we are saved, and, I trust, we shall never return to the state in which he found us. It was a beautiful pure morning that I first saw him talking with Charley. O, I shall never forget it." And the invalid wiped away the tears which were streaming down her cheeks. "The birds were singing so sweetly that I ought to have listened to them with pleasure; for once, nothing gave me more satisfaction; I did hear, but only to feel that

every thing was happier than myself. Your son stood talking with Charley for a long time, and then I heard him say, 'I am very sorry that your mother is ill. Will she see me? Perhaps we can do something for her comfort. Shall I go in, Charley?' My boy knew not what to answer, as he was ashamed to have any one look upon the sight which had caused his young heart to ache so much. I nodded my head to him, however, to bring the stranger in. I was proud, ma'am, and at any other time, under such circumstances, would have repulsed even a friend from the door; but some power, which I could not understand, induced me to admit him; and before I was aware of what I had done, Arthur entered. I saw him shudder at the scene before him, but the tear in his eye told me that he sympathized with my sorrows. Very soon that youth began to exert an influence over my stubborn will which he still retains, and I often ask myself, What has changed me thus? for, before he came, I was almost turned to stone; or, at

least, all that was womanly within me seemed to be gone, and to have left nothing but a hard, stern being, who was trying to forget that she had once possessed feelings in common with her kind. I wept as I listened to the sweet words which proceeded from the lips of your child, and when he said to me, 'Dear Mrs. Afton, "there is a silver lining to every cloud;" therefore do not despair,' I knew that the Almighty had sent me a comforter, and I resolved to receive him, and from that time, whenever tempted to despond, that saying came to my mind, and the load was removed, and I could see blessings in my lot of which many are deprived.

"But I did not tell you the sight which was before your son as he entered. On the floor, stretched in the deathlike sleep which follows intoxication, lay my husband. By his side stood a jug, which contained the cause of all this agony. About the room were flung remnants of articles which he had broken in his frenzy. The hearthstone was cold, and the wife and

mother, as I told you before, sat helplessly and hopelessly looking upon what was rapidly changing her from a woman into a fiend.

"To think, madam, O, that was what I dreaded! Master Arthur saved me from despair; and not satisfied with bestowing his heartfelt sympathy upon me, he led my child from the evil of his ways; for being unjustly punished by his father, (when he had been drinking, for he was always kind when sober,) and repulsed and scolded at by his mother, he had fled from his home for companions, and was fast learning the arts and evil ways of a vagrant. But Arthur encouraged him, gave him clothes, (and with decent clothing his self-respect returned,) induced him to go to school, assisted him in his lessons, commended his love of flowers, gave him seeds, and told him how to plant them. But this is not all, my dear Mrs. Burton. Not content with saving the mother and child, he sought out the place where Mr. Afton worked, in his own kind way entered into conversation with him, asked him with regard to

the machinery which he was assisting to construct, listened with attention and interest to my husband's explanations, and thus won his heart; for Mr. Afton is an excellent workman, loves his business, and is fully competent to explain every part of it, when not under the influence of his worst enemy. Your son would appoint a time when he would again visit him, and this induced my husband to remain sober, so as to be prepared to answer his questions; and his being so much noticed by an intelligent youth caused his self-respect to return, and he gradually left going to the tavern, and forsook the acquaintances which he had formed there. His health and strength, which had been failing, have returned to him; and with them his natural energy of character. He now accomplishes in much less time what is expected of him, so that he has considerable leisure, and this he devotes to repairing the house, and cultivating the garden; and you see, madam, how well he and Charley have made it look. He is always kind to me

now, and I strive to meet him with a cheerful look when he returns from work. This is not hard for me, for I am happy, and cannot bless God enough for sending your son to this valley."

"Do you suffer much pain from your limbs?" said Mrs. Burton.

"Sometimes, ma'am, but I know it is all right; and I always see the 'silver lining' now, let my poor feet ache ever so badly. A few weeks ago, Master Arthur was asking my husband if a chair could not be constructed by which I could be placed in different positions, and thus be relieved. He said that he had heard his father speak of something of the kind, and that I ought to have one. Mr. Afton replied, that he wished 'his poor Mary,' could be made easier. Nothing further was said upon the matter, and I should have thought no more about it, only to remember with pleasure the affectionate wish uttered in his old tones by my husband. A fortnight ago, however, Arthur's bright face, which always brings happiness with it, peeped into the door, and he said, —

"'Don't you wish to take a short ride on your birthday, Mrs. Afton?'

"I could not imagine what he meant, but something good I was quite sure; so I replied, as he seemed to expect an answer, —

"'Yes, my dear boy, if I could only get into a carriage; but that I have not done for so many years that I should quite forget how to behave.'

"'We shall see about that,' said he, and away he ran, his face beaming with joy.

"In a few hours after, in came Mr. Afton, Arthur, and Charley, bringing this nice chair, which, as you see, ma'am, is so comfortably stuffed; and it can be raised or lowered as I please; it is on castors, and I can push myself all over the house. It has been a great comfort to me, and even the exercise of moving from room to room has improved my health.

"'Here is your carriage, Mary,' said Mr. Afton; 'and now you will be a little more comfortable, and by and by, when we can push you

about the garden, and let you smell of Charley's flowers, you will be better, I am sure.'

"'O, what a comfort!' I replied. 'But, my dear John, I fear you have been obliged to run in debt to get it for me.'

"'No, no,' he said. 'It is Arthur's present; and to him your thanks are due. It is all paid for, I assure you, and is that dear boy's birthday present to my wife.'

"'O Mr. Afton,' said Arthur, 'pray do not say so. It is your husband's gift, my dear madam, and he has taken the greatest pains to procure it for you from the city, where he has been for several days to assist in its construction.'

"'Mary,' said my husband, 'it *is* Arthur's present, for by his efforts I was rescued from a drunkard's grave, and the money which I paid for the chair, but for him, would have been worse than wasted at the tavern; and more than this, I could not save enough by several dollars to pay for it; the deficiency he chose to make up out of his own pocket; and when I objected to borrowing

it, lest it should not be agreeable to his mother, he did away with all my scruples, by saying that she always permitted him to do with his pocket money as he pleased.

"'So you see, Mary, that I was right, and it is really Arthur's present.'

"O madam," said Mrs. Afton, "God has indeed bestowed upon you a treasure, and long may he be spared."

Mrs. Burton mingled blissful tears with those shed by Mrs. Afton, and as she arose to depart, she assured the invalid that she highly approved of all that her son had been able to do for her. She also expressed a wish to have Charley pass two evenings in the week with her son, as it might be an advantage to him to study with them. Mrs. Afton, with many thanks, assented to this proposal, and from that time until other arrangements were made, which were more for Charley's interest, these meetings were kept up.

As Mrs. Burton walked home with her son,

she could not avoid lifting her heart in thankfulness to the Giver of all good, for such a child, to be, as she hoped, a prop for her declining years.

As soon as Arthur heard Mrs. Afton commence talking to his mother about him, he had left the room, gently shaking his head for her to desist. This she understood, but she felt that she must pour out her full heart to one who better than any other could appreciate his excellence. Mrs. Burton desired to say much expressive of her approbation of Arthur's conduct, but she did not consider it judicious to give utterance to but a few words, but those were understood and garnered up by her child, who so well comprehended this best of earthly friends.

"Dear mother, do you not think Mrs. Afton uses language superior to what we generally hear from persons in her situation?"

"Yes; I remarked that repeatedly this afternoon. She must have had advantages in early life, for not only her expressions, but her

manners, are superior to those of many with whom we meet."

"I have always thought so, mother; and one day I made a remark to Mr. Afton, which induced him to give me some account of her early history. It seems that her father was not a native of this country, but was the only son of parents who during their prosperity had given him a superior education. Owing to reverses they became poor, and after their death he came to this country to seek his fortune. He was for a long time principal in an academy, with a good salary. He married, and purchased the house and land attached to it where Mrs. Afton lives. She was his only child, and he took great delight in instructing her. His wife died when his daughter was a little girl, and she and her father remained in the valley until she was grown up. As he grew old, he gave up teaching, and devoted himself to the culture of flowers, of which he was extremely fond; and when he died," said Mr. Afton, "he left the finest garden

any where about. It was his pleasure and his pride; but when it fell into my hands, it soon, through neglect, lost its beauty, and poor Mary being unable to walk, — for a dreadful rheumatic fever which she had soon after her father's decease, deprived her of the use of her limbs, — of course she could not take care of it. But I am determined it never shall look so again. Indeed, Master Arthur, you have no idea of the delight I take in its cultivation. I always loved flowers, and each blossom as it bursts forth seems to look upon me as if it thanked me for my care. I often think flowers have a language, and it is very certain that they speak to my heart in a way to make it better."

"O mother," said Arthur, "you cannot tell how much joy it affords me to see Mr. Afton and his family so happy. I do wish, however, that something more could be done to relieve Mrs. Afton. Do you not think Dr. Lawrence could help her?"

"I was thinking of that," said Mrs. Burton,

"but you have anticipated me. You shall go to-morrow and see the doctor, and ask him to call upon her; perhaps he will return with you, and then you will hear his opinion of her case."

"O, how much I hope he can benefit her, mother! it will be so delightful for her to get about again." And that cheerful, loving boy in imagination saw the invalid walking, and rejoicing in the use of her limbs, of which she had been so long deprived.

"Always hopeful, my child," said Mrs. Burton. "I trust your wishes will be realized; but you must not be too sanguine, as Mrs. Afton's lameness has continued so long."

"But, mother, nothing has been done for her, you know, and she has consulted no physician. I am almost sure Dr. Lawrence will cure her."

Arthur was so full of his desire to benefit Mrs. Afton, that he arose before the sun, and was on his way ere Mrs. Burton had left her chamber.

It was a lovely morning that he set out on his benevolent errand; the sweet breath of early summer blew upon him, the flowerets, nursed by the pearly dews, seemed to him more beautiful than usual. "And surely," whispered the boy to himself, "the music of the birds never sounded so sweetly;" and when the sun arose from behind the hills, and shone forth in all his glory, Arthur paused, and looked at it for several moments, determining in his own mind never again to lie in bed when there was such exquisite enjoyment to be derived from the beauties of the early morning. Fortunately the doctor was at home; but if Arthur had lingered longer by the way, he would have been absent. He opened the door himself in answer to Arthur's ring, all prepared to set off on his daily round of visits.

"Good morning, Cheerful Heart," said he, (for thus he generally called Arthur;) "nobody sick at home, I trust. No? Well, I am rejoiced to hear that, at any rate; but come in; I can spare you ten minutes, though I was in a great

hurry. What has given me the honor of a visit so early in the morning?"

The doctor was well acquainted with Arthur's favorite saying, and lived up to it, for the sun never shone upon a more cheerful, benevolent being than himself. He was possessed of a large property, and could have given up his profession, but his friends were so much attached to him that they would not hear of having any body else, stoutly asserting that they should die in any other hands; and his cheerful manner and kindly sympathy certainly did much towards their recovery, aside from his well-known skill. He was a physician truly for the "mind diseased" as well as the body. He pointed the way to that land where sickness and sorrow are unknown, and where all tears are wiped away.

After listening to Arthur's relation of Mrs. Atfon's case, and of some particulars of what her situation had been, the good doctor said, "Well, Cheerful Heart, I have known cases as

bad as hers, and I think something may be done for her; I cannot say, however, until I see her; but I have given you half an hour instead of ten minutes, as I promised; therefore I must run off; but tell your mother that I will be over this afternoon. So, good morning, my boy." And away went the doctor on his benevolent errands. Arthur hastened home, rejoiced to learn that the doctor thought Mrs. Afton might be relieved.

"Where is Dr. Lawrence, my dear?" said Mrs. Burton. "I hoped he would return with you."

"He will be here presently, mother; he is to call for me to go to Mrs. Afton's with him. He would have come this morning, but his business will detain him until afternoon."

"Ever in the way of his duty," replied Mrs. Burton. "Your father said to him, when he was talking about giving up his profession, that he believed he ought to continue to practise particularly among the poor, who have always found him a fast friend. I have no doubt that

he has assisted thousands. I trust his life will be spared many years, for I know of no one that could fill his place. I once heard him say, 'The poor are my children, for they have but few friends.'

"After your father's death, Dr. Lawrence seemed nearer than any one else to me, for his sympathy was so heartfelt, and he manifested it in so delicate a manner, that I can never forget it; and, besides, he had known and loved him from a boy, and could, therefore, appreciate his character better than the other persons around me."

At the time promised the doctor made his appearance at the cottage, and he and Arthur went to see Mrs. Afton, who, although the call was entirely unexpected, received him with so much propriety and native politeness that he was agreeably surprised, and found no difficulty in making her understand his wishes with regard to the course for her to pursue in order to improve her situation. After making quite a long

call, he said to her at parting, "Madam, I feel confident that you will obtain the use of your feet, although it may be some time before this is brought about; you will probably never be quite well, but you will, I think, enjoy a comfortable share of health."

"O doctor," said the poor woman, "thanks to this dear boy and his mother, under Heaven, my cup is already running over. I cannot find words to express my feelings. I had become resigned to my lot, never expecting to be any better, and feeling thankful for the comforts which I enjoyed; but you have, by bidding me hope, made me the happiest woman in existence. If the prayers of a grateful heart can benefit you, mine shall ever be offered in your behalf."

"You give me a large fee," said the doctor, "far more than my services deserve; but I will confess that they are a kind of treasure of which I am desirous of laying up a store;" and with a tear in his eye, which he hastily wiped away, the doctor returned home. I will here mention that

Mrs. Afton did recover the use of her limbs, and was able, with Charley's assistance, to visit her kind friend, Mrs. Burton, and a proud and happy boy was he as they walked together, to point out to his mother the improvements made in the valley, by the efforts and advice of his friend Arthur.

CHAPTER II.

DEATH IN THE VALLEY.

"Flowers, bright flowers? Why do ye bring
Those lovely things to me?
Think ye they soothe my saddened heart,
That's bursting to be free?
No, no, — take back the fading things,
Nor think to mend the broken strings
Of my lone heart, by bringing flowers
That perish with the passing hours."

THE summer and fall of 18— had been very lovely. Never did the trees and gardens in the Valley of Daisies present a finer appearance, or put forth their beauties more luxuriantly. Winter with his icy fingers had not as yet approached the happy valley, and many of its inhabitants, particularly the children, began to think that he had forgotten to come near them, and that the warm, smoky days would continue

until spring. Some of the older inhabitants shook their wise heads, and prophesied "either a severe winter, by and by, or sickness which would sadden the hearts of those who now rejoiced in the (as they expressed it) unseasonable weather."

We do not like this shaking of heads generally, for it looks like doubting the goodness of God, who always does exactly what is best for his creatures; and although it may seem mysterious to us, yet he doeth all things well. Sickness did come, and many hearts received wounds which it took months and years to heal; but they were healed at length, and many, who knelt over their dead ere the bodies were consigned to the earth, were enabled to breathe prayers that were not "all complaints."

In a neat cottage, at the foot of one of the hills which shut in the valley, lived a woman who was a widow, with one daughter, who was as good and as lovely a child as mother could desire. Mrs. Lawton — for this was that moth-

er's name — was a favorite with both Arthur and Mrs. Burton, and even little Annette always begged to go when they made a call upon her. There was such a congeniality of feeling between her and Arthur that it is not to be wondered at that his visits to the widow were frequent, and that he generally made a long call.

Lucy Lawton was one of those favored persons "whose wealth of hope seemed inexhaustible." Her father had once been wealthy, but had lost all his property by becoming surety for a friend, who deeply wronged him. Lucy at that time received a lesson from her mother which she never forgot; for she had, both by precept and example, carried out what she inculcated; therefore the child early learned to thank God for the mercies *still* enjoyed. It was by such instructions, always given in a cheerful manner, that Lucy's mind was developed; and when she was married to a young man worthy of her, she possessed those qualities which not

only gain, but *secure*, the esteem of a husband, which is far better. Mr. Lawton was not rich, but he received a sufficient salary to begin life in a manner which would insure to himself and wife many comforts and conveniences. Under such favorable auspices the young couple commenced housekeeping, and for two years were happy. At this time Mr. Lawton was taken ill of a fever of which he died, and the young widow was left with her child to make her way in the world by her own exertions. Mrs. Lawton deeply mourned her husband's death, for she had loved him with all the wealth of a true woman's affection. She felt, however, that she must not selfishly give way to her affliction, severe as it was. She also realized that her child was dependent upon her for support. The dignity and decision of her character were now manifested, and her energies exerted to the utmost. She *hoped*, and as Hume says, this was worth ten thousand a year to her; and certain it is, that many possessed of that sum

are not so happy as Mrs. Lawton became in the pursuit of her duty and in fulfilling it. She was an excellent seamstress, and soon procured work enough to afford a good living for herself and child. The little Emily was sent to school, and was taught of how much importance it was to improve her advantages. There were moments when Lucy Lawton felt as if every bright vision of the future, which had always been connected with her husband, had vanished; but she soon renewed her resolution to be resigned, and looked forward to the future of her daughter; and as "it requires but few threads of hope for the heart that is skilled in the secret to weave a web of happiness," Lucy became happy in weaving those threads around her cherished child. One sorrow she could not always overcome, and that was the knowledge of her failing health, and the thought of what would become of Emily if she should be taken away. This, however, led her to cast her cares upon Him who is a Father to the fatherless, and in thus

doing, all clouds were removed from her mind and hope again shone forth triumphant.

After a few years, Mrs. Lawton had accumulated sufficient money to purchase a little cottage in the Valley of Daisies, where she had removed, soon after Mrs. Burton had come there to reside. Under the genial, health-giving breezes of the valley, her health and that of her daughter, which had of late been rather feeble, began to improve; and the mother rejoiced in this favorable change more on her child's account than on her own. With returning strength the little Emily became as gay as a bird, seeming to have inherited much of her mother's hopeful spirit. After Mrs. Burton's removal to the valley, several families from the city had built houses there, and occupied them in the summer season. This was very pleasant for her and Arthur, as they thus became acquainted with persons whose educations better fitted them for companions than many of the previous inhabitants of the valley. This was also an advantage

to Mrs. Lawton, as she thus procured considerable needlework without going to the city to obtain it. One of these families, consisting of a gentleman and lady with three children, Mrs. Burton had become intimately acquainted with. Mr. and Mrs. Thornton had been prospered, and for many years had not known sorrow. Their children were lovely and amiable, and their sky appeared to be without a single cloud. Their prosperity, however, did not cause them to become arrogant, and the children were taught to treat all with kindness, but particularly the humble and the unfortunate. On this account Mrs. Burton and Arthur found them very efficient assistants in ameliorating the condition of many of the cottagers, who but for their united influence would have remained in the degraded state in which they were when they first removed to the valley.

One day, as Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Burton were making some calls, at Arthur's request they went to see Mrs. Lawton. The air

of taste in the cottage gratified them very much, and they were as well pleased with its mistress as with her house and garden; and when Emily Lawton entered with her hands filled with flowers, her sweet face suffused with a modest blush, both ladies thought they had never seen a lovelier creature; and when about to take her leave, Mrs. Thornton felt such an interest in the child that she requested her mother to allow her to come as often as she could spare her, and play with her daughter Sophia, who was of nearly the same age.

"Arthur tells me, also, Mrs. Lawton, that you sometimes do fine needlework; and as my eyes are not strong, I am prevented from attending to any thing of the kind, and should be glad to engage you to do all mine. I never wish you to hurry, as I can arrange my plans so that you will not be obliged to weary yourself."

The considerate manner in which this was said touched Mrs. Lawton's heart, and caused her to have a deep sense of the goodness of her

Father in heaven, who had thus influenced the sympathies of people in her behalf. The interest expressed for her beloved Emily also led her to reproach herself for the want of faith which she had sometimes felt when dwelling upon the future for this cherished object. "Just as Arthur said," thought the good woman to herself, — "'a silver lining to every cloud,' if we will only look for it. Bless the dear boy, he is always right, and to him I owe this supply of work, just when I was beginning to despond." With many thanks she accepted the offer, and promised that little Emily should make a visit on Sophia Thornton the next holiday. After the ladies left, Mrs. Lawton could not avoid wishing that her husband, who had so idolized their child, could have lived to share with her the pleasure of knowing that she was noticed and cared for by those whose influence upon her would be such as he would have approved. It is so hard to rejoice when those who would have joyed with us have passed from earth.

"I will not repine," said she; "I know this is wrong, and perhaps my husband's spirit is now looking down from his heavenly home, and, although I know it not, is rejoicing in my happiness. O, how much I have to be thankful for! and I trust I am truly grateful to Him from whom all blessings flow."

She wiped away a tear, but it was not a bitter one, and the thoughts of the hour produced a salutary effect upon the warm heart and hopeful spirit of the lone widow.

No wonder those ladies were attracted by the appearance of that lovely child, beautiful in person as well as mind. No wonder that in her that mother had garnered up her heart. Emily Lawton was one of those children whose mission on earth seems to be to create a world of love around them. She had that deep, holy light in her soft blue eyes which savored of heaven and of communings with angel messengers. Often, as Arthur listened to her remarks, as she accompanied him on some errand of mercy, he was

surprised at the depth of the thoughts which she expressed, so much wiser than those of the children whom he was in the habit of meeting; and he said one day to his mother that she was so lovely he feared she would not live to grow up.

"I often think, dear mother, that she is early ripening for heaven, and that poor Mrs. Lawton will be bereft of her last tie here. I drive away the thought, but it will return."

"My dear boy," said Mrs. Burton, "I trust your fears will not be realized, and that Emily will long be spared to glad her widowed mother's heart."

"O, so do I, mother; for what would Mrs. Lawton do? She is a Christian, I have no doubt, and is always cheerful; but I fear such a shock would be more than she could bear."

"We will hope for the best, my son," replied Mrs. Burton. "It may be that your fears arise from having heard that oft-repeated saying, that

'such lovely children generally die young;' now, this is not always the case, and Emily may be an exception."

Months passed on, and Arthur was still active in his efforts to promote the happiness and comfort of the people in the valley. Emily was delighted to accompany him in his visits, and she now appeared so happy and so healthy that his fears on her account began to abate. Yet the ethereal expression in her eyes, and the soul-felt ardor with which she engaged in every work of love and goodness, frequently caused the old thought to return to his mind.

O, how happy were the days when those two youths, so well fitted for each other's companionship, visited the couch of sickness, relieved the indigent, or cheered the sad heart with an offering of flowers from the gardens which they had cultivated, or of fruit from the vines which they together had trained! Emily had made the promised visit on Mrs. Thornton's little girl,

and had won such golden opinions from both the father and mother of Sophia, that at Mrs. T.'s urgent request the children were much together.

Sophia had one day just returned from the city, where she had been to make a visit, and Emily was passing the afternoon with her. The girls were enjoying themselves finely, Sophia in relating, in a most animated manner, the appearance of the children at a juvenile concert she had recently attended, and Emily in listening, when, in a moment, the former was seized with a dreadful headache, which obliged her to leave her description unfinished. Emily with the utmost tenderness bent over her friend, bathed her flushed brow, and did every thing which affection could dictate for the relief of the sufferer; and Sophia did seem better, and insisted upon Emily's remaining with her through the night, as she was quite sure she should be well in the morning, and would then be able to entertain her friend with what she had seen

in the city. Mrs. Lawton's consent to this arrangement being asked and obtained very readily, the friends retired to rest, anticipating much pleasure on the morrow.

As Mrs. Thornton stole softly into their room before she retired, she found them asleep locked in each other's arms.

"O," said she, as she looked at them, "can any thing be more lovely? There is something in innocent, happy childhood which speaks to us of heaven; which tells us of those pure, angelic beings which surround the throne of God, untouched by sin, untainted by the breath of corruption."

Alas! she little thought the sweet sleepers were almost there; that they were soon to commence that unending song, perfect in harmony only in the bright world beyond the stars. Could Death have power over any thing so beautiful? Yes; their Father in heaven was seeking his missing jewels, and he called them from this world, all glorious as it was to them,

filled with the flowers which they loved so well, to a home where flowers never fade, and sorrow never enters. In the midst of happiness, while their speaking eyes were yet bright, and Health flung around them her rich luxuriance, that devouring scourge which has scathed and withered the hopes of so many fond parents, and sent so many of the beautiful ones of earth to a premature grave, had marked them for its victims. The scarlet fever was in the valley, and where would its ravages stop? Instead of being better in the morning Sophia was worse, and in great alarm Mrs. Thornton summoned Dr. Lawrence. Every thing that human skill could do was done, but it availed not; and scarce three days had passed away ere all that remained on earth of the beloved Sophia was the cold and untenanted form in which her happy spirit had once dwelt. In two weeks from that time Emily was also called from earth to join her friend in heaven. The widow was overwhelmed with sorrow. She could not be resigned. Many said

they had expected it, and they wondered that she should be so overcome. Ah, they knew not what treasures of the heart, what rich fancies had been destroyed, sent apparently from her very grasp by this blow. Every bright vision of the future had been connected with her child; and that mother, hopeful as she naturally was, could not at once gather up the fragments of her shattered hopes, and mould them anew. The first thing which aroused her from her grief was a visit from Arthur, who bore in his hand a bouquet which he had gathered from Emily's garden; he had culled those flowers which he knew she loved the best, and brought them as an offering, which, he trusted, would soothe the mourner's heart.

"O, my dear friend, I thank you; you, I know, can feel for me, for you knew and appreciated my child. But, madam," said she to Mrs. Burton, "how feeble is language to express the agony of a mother, when called to surrender the cherished object of her love to the silent grave;

to stand by the bed of death, and watch the sufferings which she cannot alleviate; to see the eye now beaming with consciousness, and then averted by distress, and to know that no rest but that of the grave will still that agony, and that the moment which brings relief to the sufferer will separate her from all on earth to whom she is so dear; to know that those sealed lips will never again give voice to the sweet words of affection, or those arms be extended to caress you! O, how can I be resigned?"

"Look for the 'silver lining,' my dear Mrs. Lawton, and see it in the sweet smile which still illumines the face of Emily, and tells us that she is far happier than she could be amid the sorrows of this earth. Remember that the grave cannot fetter the soul, and hers is now expanding in heaven. She was happy here; she is happy there; for while on earth, —

'Happy and joyful on she moved,
Bright angels ever near,
For well are earth's pure beings loved
By dwellers in that sphere,

Where fadeless flowers and crystal rills
Rich music breathe amid the hills.' "

"I will be calm," said Mrs. Lawton.

"Be still, my heart! what could a mother's prayer,
In all the wildest ecstasy of hope,
Ask for its darling like the bliss of heaven?"

From that time the bereaved mother was calm. Arthur saw her shed tears but once, and it was when they laid her child's body in the earth. The fever continued to rage in the valley until the cold weather came, and many a cherished one was called home. The widow Lawton and Arthur were in every cot where the destroyer came, assisting the helpless, comforting the mourner, and bidding the hopeless to hope again. In thus doing the widow found comfort. The Friend in whom she trusted never forsook her, and she was not miserable. Sorrow had touched her cheek, but it was only with a softening power. She was pale, but not wasted. There was still hope in

her heart, the hope of once more meeting those who had gone before in a brighter world.

She could calmly look upon the happiness of others, and do all in her power to promote it. She felt that hers would come, but not yet.

CHAPTER III.

THE HERMIT.

"But there misfortune followed him,
And Sickness with her livid eye
There sought him out, and laid her hand,
Her withering hand, upon his brow,
And made him feel a pilgrim there,
And that his place on earth was not
In that far sunny land."

In one of Arthur's rambles among the hills he came upon a cottage, which so nearly partook of the color of the shrubbery which surrounded it, now of a grayish hue, it being winter, that he would not have observed it but for the smoke which was gracefully curling upward from its chimney. There was an air of taste evidenced in the rustic seats made of the roots and branches of trees, in the training of the trees and shrubs, which ornamented the enclosure at-

tached to the cottage, which interested him, and induced him to approach it, hoping to get a peep at its inmates. As he came nearer, he overtook a boy who was a few years younger than himself, and but for a sickly paleness which was on his thin cheek, he would have been handsome. As it was, his face had the expression which mental cultivation alone can give. He returned Arthur's salutation with so much politeness that he was very agreeably surprised. Seeing him about to enter the cottage, young Burton said,—

"Will you allow me to step in and rest myself for a short time? I have been rambling among the hills for several hours, and am considerably fatigued."

"Certainly, sir; my brother will be glad to have you; and although he cannot see you, for he is blind, yet he can hear you converse, and that will be a pleasure to him, I am quite sure. He is rather low spirited to-day, however, and may not entertain you as agreeably as he sometimes could; but perhaps your call will do him good."

Thus cordially invited, Arthur very gladly entered, and saw before him a gentleman of about forty years of age, whose form and face had all the dignity of manly beauty, although sickness and hope deferred had marked it with lines which made him look older than he really was. His eyes were large, dark, and expressive, although they were sightless. At first you would not have suspected his misfortune; but after observing him closely, you would perceive from the motions of his hands and the care with which he moved, that he was deprived of one of God's best gifts to man. His mouth had an expression of so much tenderness, particularly when he replied to his young brother's questions, that Arthur's heart was drawn towards him at once. His dress, although old-fashioned, was neat in the extreme, and seemed to our young friend in accordance with what he supposed from his appearance his character must be. With perfect ease Mr. Carlton (for that was his name) entered into a conversation with

Arthur which soon convinced him, young as he was, that he had met with a person possessing no common mind, and who must have devoted years to intellectual pursuits. In fact, the boy was so delighted with his visit, that he prolonged it until the sun was sinking behind the western hills; and even then he felt unwilling to part with his new friend. Mr. Carlton appeared on his part equally gratified, and urged Arthur to repeat his visit with an earnestness which convinced him that he was a welcome, although unexpected, guest.

Upon his return home, he related to his mother the agreeable acquaintance he had made, and expressed a desire to know more of the stranger. Mrs. Burton made some inquiries with regard to this gentleman. All that was known of him was, that a few years previous to Mrs. Burton's removal to the valley, the recluse had come there and bought the cottage which he occupied, which was then in a dilapidated condition, but had since been made habitable. He was led

about by his young brother, who had always devoted himself to him, seeming to anticipate his every wish. The neighbors had tried to become acquainted with Mr. C. at first, but he appeared so reserved, although he answered their inquiries with kindness, that they had ceased to call upon him. All the information they could obtain was through Mrs. Brown, the laundress, who said that whenever she went to get the clothes the young brother was either reading aloud to him, or working in the garden in the summer. And said she, (for although something of a gossip, yet she was "a very good hearted woman,") "It almost makes the tears come in my eyes to see little Robert lead his brother about, always finding the nicest seat in the prettiest spot for him; and one day — would you believe it? — the dear child carried him the most beautiful bunch of roses, lilies, and pinks that you ever saw, just as if he could see them with his poor blind eyes, which look at me often in such a way that I can scarcely think he is

blind. I know he is though, for when he took the flowers, he said, 'Thank you, brother; they are very fragrant and very beautiful, I know, for although I cannot see them, yet I have not forgotten how they used to look, and I can tell by the feeling that they are very perfect in form. You have succeeded finely in raising them, and they are a great comfort to me;' and then he placed his hand on Robert's head, and turned towards him with so much love in his face, that his little brother would have kissed him, I know, if I had not been there. Every morning, Robert goes to the city, but he gets back before noon, and if I happen to go to Mr. Carlton's while he is away, he is always playing upon his fiddle, or violin, as he calls it; and once I heard him singing a song which was so sad that you would have cried to hear it. It was about friends he had lost, and I could hear his voice tremble once in a while when he was singing it. I didn't like to go in then, so I went round after the other folks' clothes first, and when I got

back he was in the garden with Robert. O, I wish you could hear him play, for he makes the fiddle laugh or cry, or whatever he wishes. I am so glad, as I told my husband to-day, that he can amuse himself with his music. He's got heaps upon heaps of books; but what a pity he can't see to read one of them; but Robert reads them to him, and that's a comfort; but he, poor boy, looks sick and delicate like, and can't last forever. He would be better, I know, if he would play with other boys. I told him so once, but he said he was well, and that he could not leave his brother. We had some nice vegetables the other day, and I told my boy to take them over some; but I thought, perhaps, I had better go myself, as Mr. Carlton was so particular like. He thanked me, but I thought from his manner that he would rather I should not have brought them; so I haven't sent any thing else. He don't seem proud, but yet I think he don't like to take favors. He is a good man, I believe, and a great scholar; but he don't want to get acquainted

with folks, for Mrs. Cross called to see him, and although she says he treated her well, yet somehow she didn't want to go again. Every body calls him the Hermit, and they don't trouble him now, but let him live in his own way. I saw Arthur Burton go there the other day, and since then he has been a number of times, so I guess Mr. Carlton likes him; but that is nothing strange, for every body loves him, for he is always doing good to every body. I never shall forget what he did for us when my Mary Ann was sick; but you all know him, so I need not tell you of his good deeds; and here I have been talking for an hour, and Mary Ann is at home all alone; she won't know what's got me." And away went the kind-hearted but loquacious gossip, Mrs. Brown.

Arthur continued to visit Mr. Carlton, and each visit endeared the recluse to him more and more. One day Mr. C. said to him, —

"My dear boy, I feel that I am growing so fond of your society that I know not what I

should do if deprived of it; yet I have been thinking that if we devoted some of the hours we spend together to reviewing your studies, your mother would, perhaps, approve of it, and would be willing to spare you longer to me. Robert is one of the best fellows in the world, and one of the most devoted brothers; he is obliged," said Mr. C., with some hesitation, "to spend his forenoons in the city, writing; for, although so young, under my teachings he has learned to keep books very neatly, and in that way he earns enough for our support, with a small fund which I possess. Our wants are easily supplied; therefore a few hours a day are all that is necessary for him to apply himself. I fear, although he never complains, that he is not quite well, and if he has a companion of his own age, I think it will be beneficial to us both. Your cheerful, hopeful spirit has already done wonders for us; and at times I, who had almost become a misanthrope, can see in my mind's eye the 'silver lining' to the dark clouds which have

overshadowed my life. I can instruct, although I am blind; for fortunately I am blessed with a good memory, and can recall almost all that I learned before this misfortune overwhelmed me. For years I feared it, and endeavored to lay up a store of information against the long night of darkness which I believed was to come upon me."

"My mother will be delighted, sir, to find such a teacher; for she was saying, a few days since, that she should be obliged to look out for a tutor for me, as I was getting beyond 'her knowledge,' and you would exactly suit her, I am sure, if you will take me as your pupil. Mr. Thornton has a son of the same age as myself, and there is Charley Afton, whose tuition my mother will defray, and ourselves, with your brother Robert, will just make up a pleasant class. O, do consent to take us, Mr. Carlton; it will only occupy a few of your spare hours, and will, perhaps, amuse without fatiguing you."

"If your parents approve I shall like the plan much."

"When shall we begin, Mr. Carlton? But I have already been receiving instructions from you at every interview."

"As soon as your friends are ready, Arthur. But do not be too enthusiastic; you may not progress as rapidly in all your studies as if your teacher could see, but in some it will make no difference. I have a good library, although not very large; but to that you shall always have access, and when you feel disposed to read aloud to me, the habits of discipline which I acquired when in college may be of advantage to us now."

"How much we shall all thank you, sir," said Arthur, "for allowing us to make this arrangement! We will be ready by the day after to-morrow, as I am quite sure of the approval of our friends."

As Arthur had supposed, his mother, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, and Charley's parents were high-

ly gratified at finding a tutor for their children so near home, and one with whom an after acquaintance proved a source of the greatest pleasure. Months passed on, and the young men progressed with rapidity in their studies, and became so much attached to their teacher that they vied with each other in guiding him in his walks; for now the recluse was often persuaded to accompany his young friends home, where he always received a cordial welcome. Few persons possessed such conversational powers as Charles Carlton, and as he brought forth from the inexhaustible storehouse of his memory incidents which he had met with in his travels, sketches of persons whom he had seen abroad, and relations from books which he had read, all paused to hear, forgetting the flight of time. It was most touching, however, to listen to his vivid descriptions of Nature in all her forms, as he spoke of the stars, the mountains, the lowly flowers at their base, the ocean in its mild and in its stormy moods, he seemed

again to be contemplating them, and one could scarcely believe that he was only living in the past. At these times he was happy, for he dwelt in a world so beautiful that he forgot his great deprivation. Said he to Arthur's mother, one morning, —

"I am a better and a wiser man, madam, since I have known your son, for he has taught me lessons, boy as he is, which will cheer my pathway, and lead me to see brightness where all before was dark and dreary. I will one day relate to you my history, and then you can judge for yourself whether my life has not been a sad one; and you will not wonder that I desired to shut myself out from communing with my kind. The people here have called me the 'Hermit,' and I deserved the appellation, for I secluded myself from society, and by my acts at least, if not by my words, declined their companionship. I did wrong, as Arthur has taught me to think, for people were disposed to pity the blind man's lot. Even my laundress,

unlearned as she is, speaks to me with a tenderness in her tones which always goes to my heart, and offers her services to myself and Robert with a delicacy I have often looked for in vain in those occupying what the world calls a far higher station in life."

"Ah, yes, my friend," replied Mrs. Burton, "my own experience has proved that true goodness oftener dwells beneath the cotton garment than the silken and velvet attire."

In the pursuit of his self-imposed duties and in the society of his kind friends, months passed tranquilly by to Mr. Carlton, and in the cheerful, active, social being who now frequently visited the cottagers, noticed their children, and always received their attentions with kindness, few would have recognized the silent, reserved hermit who seldom left his solitary home except to take a short walk with his delicate-looking little brother, who had seemed almost too frail to long continue an inhabitant of earth. The change in Robert was as great as that which

had taken place in his brother; for in seeing that dear friend on whom his very existence appeared to depend, happy, he became joyful himself, and the healthful exercise which the pupils of Mr. Carlton daily took had invigorated his frame, and given color to his pale cheek.

"I will, as I promised, madam, relate my history to you," said Mr. Carlton to Mrs. Burton, one stormy evening which he was passing at her house; "we are not liable to any interruption, as the night is so inclement."

"It will afford us much pleasure to listen to it, my dear sir," said Mrs. Burton; "but if it will pain you to recall events long past, do not make the effort for our gratification."

"Arthur's pleading looks would induce me to go on, had I no other motive, ma'am; but I think the effect of the narration will be salutary upon myself, for now, thanks to my young friend here, I can see 'silver linings' to many of the clouds with which my life has been darkened.

"I was born in this country, in the delightful

town of D———. My parents were descendants of highly respectable families, who had borne unsullied reputations for generations. Never very wealthy, but generally well to do in the world, they had always given one or more of their sons a collegiate education, and many of them had held offices of trust in the states in which they resided. My father was in public life, and he possessed a mind of no stinted resources. He was not a great man, but he was a good one in the true sense of the word, and my mother, my beloved mother, was every way worthy to be the bosom friend and companion of such a man. She was to my father the 'very spirit of his being,' and when she left this world for a better, his sun appeared to set in darkness. The good always seem to be taken from earth young, as if this world, with its cares, its trials and sorrows, were no fitting abode for their pure spirits. From this time my father's health began to fail, and ere two years had passed over his head, the tomb which held my

mother's remains was again opened, and my father was laid by her side. They were united in heaven; but we, one sister and myself, were left to mourn over a deserted hearthstone and a cheerless home. My mother's harp we still retained as a sacred thing, and as Angela and myself looked at it, we sometimes imagined that we should again see her dear form bending over it; and often in the silent night I have thought that I heard her touching its chords as in days which were forever past. It was a long time before I discovered that it was my sister who stole at that hour to the room which my mother had occupied, to commune in this way with our sainted parent, for the child really believed that her mother assisted her in her efforts to improve herself in an art which she worshipped; and, perhaps, if this is permitted, it was so, for that young girl (she was only sixteen) became one of the finest players on the harp in the vicinity. At the time of my parents' death I had not finished my collegiate course, and in accordance

with their desire, I went through with it. As soon as the clods were replaced on my father's grave, I sold our house, hurried from the spot, and taking Angela with me, went on with my studies with an earnestness and determination which soon prostrated a frame never vigorous. A fever laid me on my couch for weeks, and during that time I learned the value of a sister's tender love and care. But Angela's constitution was unequal to the task which she had undertaken, and fatigue and anxiety overcame her, and when I was pronounced convalescent she was laid upon a bed of sickness. She was in a constant state of delirium, and most touchingly would she entreat her attendants to allow her to go to her mother, if only for a few moments; and then she would imagine that I needed attention, and that she must see me. O madam, the agony I then endured can scarcely be conceived of. She was all I had left to love on earth; and O, how earnestly I prayed that her life might be spared. My prayers were answered, and for a

few years more she remained here to illumine a home, which but for her presence would have been all dark to me. Years passed on, and I selected the profession of law, by which to obtain a livelihood; for although we had some property left us, still there was not sufficient to support us as I wished without exertion. I found myself, however, poorly adapted, after a few years' experience, to push my fortunes in this way, as I could scarcely breathe in the atmosphere of the law courts; so I abandoned my profession, and devoted myself to literary pursuits, into which my sister entered with her whole soul. But somebody else had discovered the beauty and brightness of the gem, which I had determined to appropriate to my own use. Angela was wooed by one worthy of her, and I could not deny my sanction to her marriage, for I felt it would be wrong for me to be thus selfish, although I really believe she would have remained with me, and led a single life, if I had expressed one desire to that effect. I could not

do it; so she was married, and I knew that she was happy. Solitary and alone,—for I could not intrude my moody self upon her happiness,—I resolved to travel, particularly as this was prescribed by my physicians, as my health was failing, and I then first began to perceive a weakness in my vision, which was attributed to feebleness of body. For the next five years I lived among the most beautiful scenes of earth. I visited England, and gazed upon its wondrous architectural piles, planned by those who had for scores of years been dust. I went to France, and feasted my soul upon her galleries of paintings, and gained a degree of health beneath her sunny skies. I next wandered to the land of your birth, where the rosy heavens and the glorious sunshine so early ripen the hearts which dwell beneath their influence. I drank in rich draughts of loveliness, as I gazed upon that bay which is in sight of the home of your childhood. I loitered long 'mid the cliffs which overlook it, laying up a store of beauty which

should dwell in my mind after my fading vision should be lost in darkness. I studied Nature in all her forms. The grand, the picturesque, the lovely, the frightful, all had charms for me; for I was tracing pictures upon my mind which I hoped to make so indelible there, that when blindness came upon me (for I felt that it must come) I might live over again the happy hours which I had passed amid her great storehouse, and be resigned to what was inevitable. Little by little the light faded from me. I was not blind, but I could not for years see distinctly; yet I thanked Heaven that I could see even that little. But I must hasten on to the saddest part of my story. Sorrows many and great now befell me. One who had promised to bear my name, and whom I had deemed all that was excellent, proved recreant to her vows, and wedded another, in whom I had confided as if he had been a brother; that false friend not only seriously injured me pecuniarily, but he made a wound in my heart which has never quite healed.

I hurried home, sure of finding a true, loving, sympathizing friend in my sister. 'Yes,' said I, 'Angela loves me better than herself. She will receive me, poor, blind, hopeless, and desponding as I am.' I hastened on, sure of grasping one warm hand, and clasping to my breast one heart that could feel for me. It were better I had lingered, for the blow would have been spared me for a time.

"Alas! madam," said Mr. Carlton, "instead of the kiss of affection and the tear of joy at my return, I found but a grave. Angela had gone to rejoin those whom she had so loved in heaven. Her husband was dead, also, of the same fever, and a feeble boy was all that was left to remind me of the joys past, never to return on earth. That child is Robert, who has always called me brother, as he liked the name better than that of uncle, and a dear and tender brother he has been to me; but for him I should long since have sunk into my grave; but feeling that I had something to live for has caused me

to make an effort to support life, and I have lived on, caring not for companionship, therefore shunning my fellows. While Robert was very young, I went and came among men where duty bade me, avoiding, however, all society as much as possible, only mixing with those who took care of the child, or when it was necessary to attend to his wants and my own. The boy was too young when 'the pall of death' was let down upon his parents to remember the great affliction which had befallen him; but when, as he grew older, I led him to their graves, and told him of his mother, he wept such tears as children seldom shed; and since then I am sensible he has felt bitterly that void in the heart which only an orphan can know. He is much older in feeling than in years, and as soon as he could guide my steps, I requested a friend to purchase the cottage which I now occupy; for I remembered this valley, and have often wandered here in happier days with my mother and Angela. The city had lost its charms for

me, and the world its allurements, and I stood upon my native soil as a stranger in a strange land. Disappointment, misfortune, and ill health clustered around me, and thus my character took its stamp, and Robert, being constantly with me, learned to feel as I felt, and think as I thought. If Angela had lived, we should have been different beings, for her heart was too finely attuned to care much for the enjoyments of earth; hers was a mind which would command respect wherever she moved. With all this, my sister could love with the fervor and strength of woman, and upon those whom she did love was poured out a wealth of affection which nought but death could destroy. You will forgive me, madam, for dwelling thus upon her virtues; but when speaking of her, I forget every thing else. After I came to the valley, as you know, I declined all companionship, and lived only for Robert, who devoted himself to me with an untiring love, seldom manifested by a child of his age. We had been here about two years

when my sight failed entirely, and I have since lived in the past. Robert every day read to me from some volume in my library, and in instructing him and in thinking of the incidents of my life, time has slowly gone on, bringing me each year nearer to its close. But since my acquaintance with your son, I have become another being, and have borrowed from his cheerful, loving spirit rich draughts of content, and even happiness; for owing to his suggestion and your kindness, my little class of pupils was formed, and in listening to their recitations and in gaining a knowledge of their natures, I have forgotten my own sorrows, and have become, I trust, a better man. I can now endure the thought of living many years, and have no desire to murmur at what I once considered an eternal night. I can now play upon my mother's harp, which until within a few months was kept out of sight, and I almost feel, at times, as Angela did, as if in thus doing I

was communing with the loved, and not lost, only gone before."

"I wonder not at your sadness, my dear sir," said Mrs. Burton, as she wiped the tears from her eyes; "yours have been such sorrows as but few could sympathize with, for but few have suffered as you have. I have known affliction, but I have never sorrowed without hope; there has generally been a ray of brightness to penetrate my clouds, and keep me from utter despair. I have almost always been able to see 'the silver lining,' and have tried to live above earth and its transitory joys."

"I must now bid you and Arthur good night," said Mr. Carlton. "Our walk home will not be an unpleasant one; for Robert tells me, and I know from the feeling of the atmosphere, that the storm has passed away. How pure the air is, and how fragrant are the flowers and shrubs! Perhaps I can appreciate, if not the sights, the

perfumes and the sweet sounds of nature better than those who possess in perfection all their senses; for as one fails Heaven mercifully quickens those which remain." And with a cheerful smile upon his features, Mr. Carlton took leave of his friends for the night.

"My son," said Mrs. Burton, "I am anxious that Dr. Lawrence should become acquainted with Mr. Carlton. He has a high reputation for the treatment of eye diseases, and possibly something could be done for our friend. I will invite the doctor here, and perhaps, after your tutor has learned to appreciate his many excellences, he will confide in him, and allow him to examine his eyes."

"I wish he might, mother. I spoke to him about it a short time since, but he replied that he had had them examined many times, and had spent much money, and been imposed upon so frequently that he had determined never to make another trial, but must be resigned to his lot. I think, however, that his feelings

have changed since then, and that he now might be induced to consult Dr. Lawrence. At any rate, two such men should be acquainted."

"Mr. Carlton has promised to have his harp brought over, and play to us some evening next week. I will ascertain which will be most convenient to him, and then we will send for the doctor."

"In the mean time I will see Dr. Lawrence, mother, and enlist his feelings in Mr. Carlton's behalf; but that is hardly necessary, for I am sure Dr. L. will be delighted with him as soon as he hears him converse, especially if we can make Mr. C. forget that there is a stranger present, as you know he is sometimes reserved at first."

"Well, my son, do as it pleases you best. I shall, I am sure, be satisfied with your arrangements; and if such a valuable man as Mr. Carlton can be restored to society, and to the usefulness he is capable of, we shall all have great reason to rejoice."

Robert was let into the secret, if thus it may be called, planned by Mrs. Burton and Arthur, for a meeting to take place between Dr. Lawrence and Mr. Carlton, and the excellent boy was almost wild with delight at the idea of his beloved friend's sight being benefited. Mrs. Burton felt compelled to tell him that it was altogether improbable that Mr. C.'s eyesight could be restored; but she also said that it was right to hope, even though their ardent wishes might be disappointed. Robert, however, was such an enthusiast that his transports could scarcely be moderated, and he was so uncommonly joyous that Mr. Carlton noticed it, and rejoiced at it as an evidence of returning health.

Wednesday was the evening appointed for the meeting at Mrs. B.'s, and with Mr. C.'s consent all of his pupils were present to hear him play upon the harp. Dr. Lawrence did not arrive until young Thornton and Charles Afton had left, much gratified with their tutor's music, for he was a proficient in the art; but they were

obliged to bid their friends good night at an early hour, that their lessons for the following day might be in readiness. It was past eight o'clock when the good doctor came; he apologized for his late call, by saying the duties of his profession had detained him; he, therefore, hoped his excuse would be deemed sufficient.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Burton; "but allow me to introduce you to our friend, Mr. Carlton, my son's tutor, of whom you have heard us so frequently speak."

As Mrs. Burton spoke, the doctor turned to offer his hand to Mr. C., but hastily withdrew it, and fairly hugged him around the neck, in a most cordial and characteristic manner. This surprised Mrs. B. and Arthur; but their surprise was increased fourfold when the dignified Mr. Carlton returned the doctor's embrace with equal cordiality. The doctor was the first to break the silence, by exclaiming,—

"Can I believe my senses? and is this Edward Crawford, the long-cherished and dearly-

loved friend of my youth, whom I have mourned as dead in a foreign land? Well, Cheerful Heart, wonders will never cease, and I believe you are fated to bring good news. I always rejoiced at your coming, but I little thought that you would introduce me to one whom I had long given up as lost in this world. With all your other good qualities, I had no idea that you could bring the dead to life. But, Edward, tell me where you have been, and when you returned to your native land, why you did not inform me of it. Did you, could you believe that Charles Lawrence had changed; or that he could ever forget one of a family to whom he owed so much? Do explain, for Mrs. Burton and Arthur, as well as myself, are longing, I know, to have the mystery solved."

"My dear Charles, this is as much of a surprise to me as to you; for when I came home, and found the last link which bound me to earth severed by the death of Angela, I was informed, when I sought you, to pour into your faithful

breast my sorrows, that you had gone abroad, and were not expected to return for years. Desiring to be entirely forgotten by those who had known me in happier days, I changed my name, and with Angela's child retired to the cottage which we now occupy. You will remember that my sight was poor when I left home, but at that time you thought with care it might be preserved; but alas! I could not be careful of it, for my only pleasure arose from study, and I used to read nearly all night, as my mind was in such a state that I could not sleep. This, with ill health, brought about what I had so long dreaded; and for four years I have seen only with my mind's eye the beauties which surround me. But I am now happy, thanks to Arthur, who has planned a delightful occupation for me. O doctor, you cannot imagine how much I owe him; for when I first made his acquaintance, I was fast becoming a misanthrope, feeling that I never again could love any body but Robert, and that none else cared whether I

lived or died. But though my eyes are closed forever upon this beautiful earth, and all my former prospects are blighted, yet I am resigned, and now feel as if my usefulness and happiness were in a degree restored."

"But, Edward," said the doctor, "it is possible that your sight can be restored; and as I look at your eyes, I have strong hopes that this may be the case. I will come to-morrow, and bring an eminent oculist, Dr. Williams, with me. He is remarkably skilful, and has already restored many to sight, who had for years been blind. He is not only very skilful in his profession, but you will find him worthy of your regard for the unbounded benevolence of his heart. In fact, he belongs to 'the highest style of man,' and his views and feelings as a Christian are beautifully blended with those of a classical scholar."

"From your description," said Mrs. Burton, "I shall be impatient to make the doctor's ac-

quaintance; and I see from Arthur's eyes that I give voice to his wishes also."

"O, yes, Cheerful Heart," said the doctor, "I prophesy you and he will be bosom friends at once, for you are congenial souls."

"Your partiality, my dear sir, blinds you to my many faults; but I trust one day I shall be deserving of it."

With a cordial grasp of the hand from all, the good doctor went on his homeward way, hoping, almost with certainty, that the blessing of restored sight was in store for his friend Crawford.

Mr. Crawford, as we will now call him, returned home that night with hope in his heart, although he scarcely dared indulge it, he had been so frequently disappointed in the checkered scenes of his life.

Robert's face fairly glowed with joy, as he said to his brother, "You will see, I know you will; for such a skilful man as Dr. Lawrence cannot well be mistaken; and every thing else

unpleasant will vanish before so much happiness."

"It would certainly have a wonderful effect, my dear Robert; but we must not be too sanguine, lest the disappointment should be more than we can bear."

But Robert could not be as calm as his brother, and he lay the whole night without closing his eyes, thinking of walks which he would take with him, and lovely views which he would show him when he could see again. Just as morning dawned, he fell asleep only to dream over his waking thoughts, and to start from his light slumbers, rejoicing at the bright prospect before his beloved friend. At the appointed hour the physicians arrived; and after carefully examining Mr. Crawford's eyes, and consulting together, they decided that it was on many accounts best that an operation should be performed, as in all probability Mr. C.'s sight could be partially, if not entirely, restored.

Arthur, who had waited with the most intense

interest to learn the result of their consultation, hastened to inform his mother and Robert of the good news. It was a long time, however, before the latter could be found; but at last he was discovered in his room on his knees so earnestly petitioning Heaven in his brother's behalf, that he did not hear his friend's step, and was so overcome with joy at his announcement, that it was some moments before he could speak. It was decided that Mr. Crawford should go to the city where the operation was to be performed, and where Robert was to remain with him until he could with safety return to his own home.

The operation was performed by Dr. Williams, three days after Mr. Crawford went to the city. It was successful, and the patient was allowed to take just one look at the world of beauty around him, and then he was led to a darkened room, and light was gradually admitted, until his no longer sightless eyeballs were able to bear the brightness of day.

But we will now return to the valley, and learn what has been going on there during our absence. But we must go back a few weeks, and admit our readers into a secret which caused Arthur and the two doctors to lay their wise heads together for several hours in each day, after it was ascertained to a certainty that Mr. Crawford's sight would be restored. Knowing Mr. C.'s talent for teaching, Arthur had, with the approbation of his excellent friend the doctor, resolved to interest influential persons in the city of D., and friends in the valley, who were able to assist in building an academy there, to which a house should be attached, in which the preceptor should live, and where pupils from abroad could board under his immediate supervision. When every thing was in readiness, it was their intention to request Mr. Crawford to take charge of it, with Robert for an assistant. Here boys were to be prepared for college in one department, and it was proposed that Charles Afton should instruct the younger

children of the valley in another, winters, as he designed to go to college, and what he could earn in this way would nearly defray his expenses; and as his father was now prospering in business, he would gladly make up any deficiency.

Arthur's plan was highly approved of by all to whom it was mentioned, and a sum was soon collected sufficient to put up a fine, convenient building, spacious enough for the purposes desired. Mr. Thornton generously gave the land, and also enough for a common and playground for the pupils. In the course of the summer, a gentleman in the city, who was much pleased with the plan, and had already given largely, gave in addition several thousand dollars, the income of which was to be appropriated as a salary for teachers, for keeping the building in repair, ornamenting the grounds, &c. Daisy Valley Academy, therefore, became an endowed institution, and bade fair to open under as favorable auspices as any seminary of the kind

in the country. One clause in the conditions of this gentleman's gift delighted the inhabitants of the valley very much. It was this. Every scholar who prepared for college in that academy was, in each year of his stay there, to set out, at least, one tree, and was himself to take every care in his power to make it live, and if it died he was to replace it; and in this way in a few years the grounds would be ornamented and beautified.

Early in the spring of the next year the academy was completed, and Mr. Crawford, now in possession of his eyesight, was invited to take charge of it. With heartfelt gratitude to the friends who had exerted themselves so much in his behalf, he accepted the appointment, and devoted himself to the duties devolving upon him with an energy and determination which promised great results. His health and spirits rapidly improved in an employment for which he was so well adapted.

But probably some of our readers will like

to know how he felt after his return to the valley, when the long night which it had been his lot to endure had departed. Arthur and Robert were his companions, and as they guided him among the charming scenery of their beloved valley, and pointed out to him its pretty white cottages, embowered amid the tall elms, woodbines, and honeysuckles, he said they looked like "bowers of peace in a little world of fragrance and beauty." They lingered until the shades of evening were gathering about them, and the last rays of the setting sun were edging the summits of the hills with purple and gold. "O," said Mr. Crawford, "such scenes were always delightful to me, but this is more beautiful and impressive than any I have ever imagined." His heart seemed overflowing with joy, and he expatiated upon the beauties around him with the enthusiasm which such an occasion fully justified. He was a changed man from the time that his sight was restored, for he not only looked upon every object with the eye of a poet and

a painter, but with the deep fervent gratitude of a Christian. He saw every thing as the work of a Father who loveth his children, and has filled this world with beauty for their enjoyment. All around him spoke to his heart and awoke the poetry of feeling which lived, but had been hidden there during the years of darkness which had passed so sadly to him. In his new vocation, the traits of excellence, which, under other circumstances, would not have been discovered, expanded, and the purity and elevation of his mind, and the tenderness of his nature, evidenced themselves, and won for him the regard and affection of his pupils and friends. As a teacher, he gave universal satisfaction; and such was the reputation of the school, that new applicants were constantly presenting themselves, even after the number to which it was limited was made up. Charles Afton in his department gave equal satisfaction, and it was proverbial of Daisy Valley scholars that they were improving faster than in any

institution of the kind in the vicinity. Arthur and Charles were to go to college in the spring, as this was thought best by their teacher, as they were already prepared to enter a year in advance, and unwilling as they both were to leave their beloved valley, yet, of course, they acquiesced in Mr. Crawford's views, realizing that he had their best good at heart. Robert preferred remaining with his brother, as he had decided that his proper vocation was to be an assistant to this beloved friend; and as such, Mr. Crawford considered him invaluable, and rejoiced at his decision, as he had so long been his companion that he could not endure the idea of a separation. The day for the departure of Arthur and Charles at length arrived, and it made a great sensation in the valley, for there was scarcely a family in the whole place that had not in some way been benefited by Arthur, and by Charles as his ready and efficient assistant. Old and young gathered around them as they were about getting into the coach which

was to convey them to their destination, and showered little gifts and blessings upon them, weeping at the idea of even their short absence.

"We will take the best care of your mother and Miss Netta," said one.

"Not a weed shall rear its head in your garden," said another.

"And the flowers you shall see in our patches when you come back, Mr. Arthur, will do your eyes good to look at," said another, whom Arthur had encouraged to industry.

"God bless you all," said Arthur, as, waving his cap to them, the coach turned a corner, and he was hidden from their view.

"Ah, Charley," said he to his companion, "I had rather deserve such love as theirs than to possess the wealth of the Indies. But whom have we here? Old Mrs. Blake, I declare. Well, I am glad to see her once more; for I was sorry to leave without bidding her another good-by, for she is one of my best friends. Mr.

Clark, please to stop a minute ; here is a friend that I wish to speak to."

"We are behind our time, Mr. Arthur ; but I cannot deny your request, for I have not forgotten that you saved my life last winter, when but for your assistance I should have frozen to death, having taken a little too much at the tavern ; and thanks to you, since I have not tasted a drop of the villanous stuff, and never will, God helping me. Step up, goody ; you shall speak to Master Arthur, if I am late."

The old lady approached, holding in her hand a little bundle, which she had come a mile to present, old and feeble as she was. "Good-by, Master Arthur," said she. "I couldn't have you leave without saying one more good-by, and asking God to bless you ; but he will, I know, if the prayers of the widow and orphan are heard. Here are a pair of stockings such as you told me you liked ; and you will wear them to please me, won't you, Master Arthur ? and when you put them on, perhaps you will some-

times think of the widow whose heart you made to sing for joy."

"I give you many thanks for them, Mrs. Blake; they are just what I wanted. And you may be sure I shall not forget you, and the pleasant chats we have had together. I shall come and see you when I return, and eat some of your nice cakes again."

"I am old, Master Arthur, and may not live until then; but if I do not, we shall meet in heaven."

"And on earth, too, many times, I hope, Mrs. Blake. I shall be back, if my life is spared, in six months, and one of my first calls will be upon you, to tell you how your present wore." And having in this way caused the old lady to smile, he bade her good morning, and was soon out of sight.

"If I envy you any thing," said Charles, "it is the possession of such blessings as those, Arthur; for he that receives them is rich indeed,

both in this world, and he will, I am sure, reap a large interest in another."

"You must not envy me my treasure, my dear fellow, and you need not, for you certainly deserve your share, and I cannot afford to lose even one of those pure coins."

Arthur and Charles soon gained friends at H. They were eminent for their talents, and for the faithful discharge of their duties. They exerted an influence which was felt throughout the college. To Arthur the name of Peacemaker was given, for he often adjusted disputes and reconciled feuds which had existed for a length of time. In fact, he was almost invariably called upon by his class when any point at issue was to be settled; and so much was his opinion respected, that even the one decided against generally admitted the justice of the decision, and went away trying to be satisfied.

The months passed rapidly away, and in the pursuit of their studies our young friends

found true enjoyment. They applied themselves closely, yet they found time for long walks among the fine scenery of H. which combined the beautiful with much of the sublime and picturesque. On two sides of the town the prospect is bounded by irregular ranges of lofty mountains, whose summits rise against the sky, assuming a variety of fantastic forms, their sides being clothed with tall pines. Arthur and Charles felt quite at home here, although the hills which surrounded the Valley of Daisies were pygmies when compared with the cloud-capped mountains of H. Almost every day the friends found some new and charming scene, which lay hid among the hills, and they looked with renewed delight upon the varied and extensive prospect commanded from their tops. At one time smiling villages, with their happy homes, lay before them, and from another point of view could be seen far away in some valley a silver streamlet, whose course they could trace until it entered the broad bosom of a river,

which bore it onward to the ocean. And again they looked upon a town, where men were hurrying to and fro, each seeming intent upon some object which demanded all their attention. Large manufactories reared their broad fronts in the streets, and spacious mansions were to be seen which gave indication of wealth and thrift.

"But where are their trees?" said Arthur. "I could not live contentedly in a town without trees; it seems as if all had, in this instance, been felled for building purposes. O, how desolate a home must be there! so unlike our valley, Charles, which is almost a wilderness, you know."

"Look again, Arthur, more to the right, and you will see a redeeming feature in that little world of bustle."

Arthur did look, and saw nestled away among a forest of evergreen trees and shrubs a church, whose modest front peeped out from the tall guardian pines and elms which sheltered it with

their protecting arms. Its spire pierced the clouds, and pointed heavenward, as if to remind the busy dwellers in the town that earth was not their abiding-place. One day the friends were about ascending a mountain, the highest in the range; they paused at its foot to speak to an aged man, whose white locks floated in the breeze, but whose firm step and hale, ruddy face contradicted the tale which they told. He entered into conversation with them, and related many incidents connected with the mountains, which interested them much. Among others, he spoke of a legend which was believed by the red men who once dwelt in the vicinity, and whose hunting grounds had now passed into the hands of strangers who had forgotten their red brothers, or remembered them only as a race long since passed away. Said he, "The tribe which owned this part of the country was quite numerous, and a finer formed, brighter eyed, or braver hearted race never trod their native woods. Oswego was one of their bravest war-

riors, and was looked up to with reverence by the whole tribe on this account. He had been in danger of losing his life many times, yet never for a moment did his bright eye quail; and when led by his foes in chains to an almost certain and lingering death, still his proud lip curled in scorn, and he dared them to do their worst. By his own cunning he escaped from their hands, and lived years after to chase the deer among the vast hunting grounds of his tribe; for they extended much farther than the eye can reach, even beyond those hills where sinks the setting sun. One day, in his wanderings, he was engaged so earnestly in his favorite pursuit that he marked not the flight of time. A sudden storm arose; the loud pealing thunder echoed through the rocks, and the lightning's vivid flash, reflected in yonder lake, was all that lighted up the scene, which was now shrouded in midnight darkness. Still the heart of the brave warrior quailed not, and its throbs were not quickened; he loved the storm, for to his spirit

such scenes were congenial. Cautiously he threads his way amid dangers which would have appalled one less brave; suddenly he stops, however; an unaccustomed sound strikes his ear. It is as if a river was so near him that it would be foolhardy to proceed until the storm has passed; and now, as another flash lights up the scene, he sees before him a mighty torrent, dark as night, and deep and rapid in its course as if it would bear all before it. He pauses; and now the storm is almost over, for the sun is once more fringing the dark clouds with purple and gold, and in the far east the rainbow flings its changing hues over the sky. The rain has ceased, and the warrior looks about him to discover which is the best course for him to take to reach his home, for in the darkness he has lost his way. There seems to be but one path; but why does he not go on? Why is his face pale with dread? Why sinks that brave heart for the first time?

'It fears not man! and shall it faint
When Fancy's doubts assail?
On, red man, on! your way lies on,
Where yonder craggy height
Hangs o'er the torrent's rocky bed,
Dark as the womb of night!'

"It was told by the wise of his nation, that on the frowning height which he must climb in order to reach his home, or retrace his steps, the 'Great Spirit' was throned; and never before had one of his tribe ventured so near to that sacred rock; and if he presumed to go on, the avenging bolts of Heaven, he felt sure, would be hurled upon his head. He dared not tempt the wrath of Him who, he believed, sat in 'lofty grandeur' upon that mountain, or cross the dark lake at its foot; so, veiling his sight, he turned to pursue his homeward way in another direction. But, alas! what had been little rills when he passed them in the morning, ere the Storm Spirit was abroad, were now mighty rivers — torrents, which bore every thing before them; for that is frequently the case among

these mountains, and during one thunder storm the aspect of the place will be so changed that you would scarcely recognize the spots which you had passed an hour before. The strong warrior wandered on; but the difficulties in his way increased, and darkness coming on, he became completely bewildered. That night his wigwam was without a master, and the ashes grew cold upon his hearthstone. The morning sun arose upon the corpse of Oswego, and that lake which he had so much dreaded had become his grave; for all unknowingly he had returned to it, and found, too late, that by braving, as he believed, the dread presence 'which wielded in his hand the thunder clouds,' he had paid the penalty with his life. Long his tribe mourned his loss, and long Dove Eye, his bride, waited and watched for his coming; but his quick step no more bent the tall grass of his native valley, and his unerring aim no more brought down the swift deer. Dove Eye refused to be comforted; and one day they found her wrapped in a sleep

from which she did not awaken ; she had gone to rejoin her husband in a brighter land beyond the rising sun.

"The bones of a man were found by a party of white men, a few years since, at the foot of yonder mountain, and near the lake, which at that time could be waded across. They were gathered up and placed in a cave, which I will show you ; and there they will remain until they moulder back to dust, for those who had a right to claim them have gone to their happy hunting grounds, which no stranger hands shall deprive them of."

Arthur and Charles accompanied the old man to the cave which he had mentioned, and looked upon the remnants of mortality, which, he said, were "all that was left of the brave warrior, who feared to dare the Great Spirit." Thanking him for his kindness, they parted with their new friend, promising to visit his home at some future time.

But now the term has nearly closed, and a

letter has been received by Mrs. Burton, which contains the joyful news that, in a very short time, Arthur and Charles may be expected in the valley. For many days after this, friends were busily employed in arranging every thing about the house and garden in the most tasteful and advantageous manner, for his reception.

It was June, and the whole valley was filled with fragrance. The roses, Arthur's favorite flowers, were in full bloom, and the loved home of his childhood had never presented a more beautiful appearance. He and Charles were expected on Wednesday, and anxiously were the hands of the clock watched by Annette and her mother, as the hour drew near for the coming of the dusty vehicle, which, only twice a week, came to the valley; for there was not as much travelling then as now, and if a journey was contemplated on any other day the person must go to the city to speak for his passage. Several of Arthur's most intimate friends had assembled at Mrs. Burton's to await his arrival,

among others, Mr. Crawford and Robert, Dr. Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, &c. Soon the wheels of the coach are heard in the distance, and unable to wait quietly in the house, Mrs. Burton and Annette are at the gate. The stage comes nearer and nearer, and at length it stops, and in another moment the beloved son and brother is clasped to the hearts of those dear friends.

"How well you are looking, my son!" said Mrs. Burton. "Why, I should scarcely know my pale, thin boy in the tall, rosy, dark-complexioned young man who has returned to me; but I see that the dark color will not be permanent, as now your hat is removed, I find that your forehead retains its native hue."

"Yes, dear mother, I am much tanned; and thanks to my rambles among the mountains and to Dr. Lawrence's advice, I am in better health than ever before. You are looking just the same, but Annette has changed; O, how much! I left her a child, and she seems almost a woman.

Do not blush, sis; the change is certainly for the better, and I shall be prouder of you than ever, for I see that you retain the same loving heart, and are the same self-sacrificing, affectionate sister as when I left."

Arthur was astonished at the improvement in Annette; she had become as lovely in person as she was in mind. Her mother's teachings had not been lost upon her, and another person besides her brother looked upon her intellectual and amiable countenance with an emotion which he could not control. This was Charles Afton, who now came forward and received a warm welcome also, for he had greatly endeared himself to all the inhabitants of the cottage, and his absence had been felt next to Arthur's.

"Well, Cheerful Heart," said the doctor, who now warmly shook hands with his favorite, "I see, if I had not made some advances myself, these good people would have entirely monopolized you and Charles, and the Hermit and we other 'folks' should have seen nothing of you

until it was too dark for us to discover how much you had improved in looks, increased in stature, &c. But seriously, my dear fellow, it does my old heart good to see that you are looking in such good health, and Charley, too; well, really, if going to college makes people look so much better and handsomer, I think it would be well for you and I, Crawford, to try it, as we are getting a little in the sere and yellow leaf, and it would be quite a benefit to us to become young and good looking again."

"My dear pupils," said Mr. Crawford, "I rejoice to see you distinctly, for you know that I could only look at you with a partially obscured vision when you left; but now my sight is perfectly restored, and I am really one of the happiest men upon earth, for with sight I feel as if all obstacles in my path were nothing, and could be overcome with scarce an effort. But I am detaining you from other friends."

Robert, Arthur was delighted to find, was in good health, and instead of the silent, reserved

boy they had left, had sprung up into a cheerful, intelligent young man, who could enter with spirit and good sense into the conversation. Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, with the other friends, also welcomed the returned students to their home, but not more warmly than many a more humble friend, who modestly awaited their turn to grasp the hands which had so often been outstretched for their benefit. Even Goody Blake had hobbled over to Mrs. Burton's to see young Master Arthur; and right glad was he to return her friendly words, and to invite her in where she could rest her weary limbs, and be taken good care of by the thoughtful Annette, who, Mrs. Blake declared, was "just like Arthur," his "very moral," in fact.

Seldom has a happier evening been passed than that at Mrs. Burton's cottage. The night and the scenes around were beautiful, but the conversation, the feeling that the absent one had returned to his home, prolonged the charm, and gave to it an interest which can only be felt

under similar circumstances. But we will follow Charles Afton on his homeward way ; we must quicken our pace, for he is so anxious to see the beloved ones that he allows no obstacle to detain him. But with how much surprise he looks upon the pretty white cottage which has taken the place of his former home. The young man rubbed his eyes, believing that he was under the influence of a delusion. Still the neat cottage remained where the old brown one had stood. There were the tall elms under which he had so frequently played ; the flowers and shrubs were in their old places, only there were many more of them. He could not have mistaken the spot, for there, on the east, was the lofty hill, its sides still clothed with verdure, and shaded by the pines, the same pines whose music he had in his boyhood imagined to be made by angel fingers stirring their leaves. He approached the casement ; a corner of one of the curtains had accidentally been left up ; he peeped in, and now he was sure that all was right, for at a table on

which a book was laid sat his father, who had apparently just left off reading ; his mother was on the opposite side, looking in good health, and appearing to be very happy. But, hark! she speaks.

"No Charley to-night, I fear, for it is now quite dark, and the stage arrives by eight o'clock. I trust no accident has happened ; but how dark it is!" said she, approaching a window. "I fear we shall have a storm. He is in the hands of his heavenly Father, however, and he will care for him ;" and with a resigned air Mrs. Afton resumed her knitting.

"I think he will be here yet, Mary," said Mr. Afton. "You know he wrote us that he should, and he always does as he says, unless he has a good reason for changing his plans. True, it is late, but he would have to stop to answer Mrs. Burton's and Mr. Crawford's questions, you know ; so don't be anxious."

"I wonder what he will say to the new house, and whether he will think the garden has im-

proved. I am impatient to hear his opinion, and to look at his face as he approaches it. The moon was out a short time since, but it has clouded up, so that he could not see the change. If he comes now to-night, he will go round where the door used to be in the old house, and will run into the rosebush. Had we not better hang the lantern against it, and save him from scratching himself?"

"Yes, I will get it immediately, Mary. Your woman's thoughtfulness never forsakes you; but I had quite forgotten the thorns."

As Mr. Afton went to the door, he was received into a pair of young, strong arms, and a cheerful voice said, —

"Don't trouble yourself, father; I found where the door was before the moon concealed herself behind the mountains; but if she had not lent me her friendly light, I should certainly have sought for it in the old place; but as I could scarcely believe my eyesight, I have been loitering about here for half an hour, trying to learn

whether I had really got home or not, and have only just come to the conclusion that all is right by hearing you and mother talking about me."

"Come in, my boy; we rejoice to see you. Your mother had almost come to the conclusion that you must have met with some accident; but thank God, you are safe. I had some fears myself, but I did not mean that she should know of them."

"Mother," said Charles, as he stepped softly behind her chair, "here I am returned to you, through the blessing of Heaven, and I am glad to find you so well and happy."

Up started Mrs. Afton, with all the mother beaming in her face, and for a few moments the parent and child were locked in a fast embrace.

"I am so happy to see you again, my child. I have expected you so impatiently; we are and have been happy, but I was anxious that you, too, should enjoy our good fortune. Since you went to H., my uncle, who has been so long ab-

sent, has left me some property, and we are now entirely above want. I rejoice at this, as your father will not have to work so hard, and you will not be obliged to keep school during your vacations unless you wish; we have also been able to build this new house, which is so convenient and pretty that we think you will like it. I should have written you of this, but your father and Mr. Crawford thought it would be such a pleasant surprise to you to find it all completed when you returned; so we resolved to keep the secret, though it has been a difficult matter for us to do it. The carpenters have hurried themselves to the utmost, and Mr. Crawford, Robert, and young Thornton have assisted a great deal about the garden, so that it might be in order against your return. It really looks finely, thanks to their efforts and good taste, and I am sure you will like the arrangements."

"Without doubt, mother; but how kind all are to me! I feel truly grateful to each of them."

"We have preserved a great many of your favorite lilies of the valley, at Miss Netty's suggestion. She comes to read to me almost every day, and frequently rides over with the pony chaise, with a request from her mother for me to pass the day with her; and I am so happy with Mrs. Burton and her sweet child, for she is exactly like Arthur, and but for her I should have missed his reading exceedingly, as my eyesight is quite poor now. But I need not praise Netty to one who knows her so well as you must, having seen so much of her when studying with Arthur."

What makes the young student start up and go to the window just at this moment, without replying to his parent's remarks? Is he particularly desirous of watching the clouds, or is it to conceal his face from the penetrating glance of a mother's eye? We will leave the reader to guess, and if he cannot, why, we will, perhaps, tell him at the proper time, but not now.

In a few moments Charles returned to his seat and remarked, —

"I cannot thank my friends enough, dear mother, but I am sensible of their goodness, and will, if possible, manifest my gratitude."

"They are aware of that, Charles, and enjoy doing you a kindness as much as you would delight in benefiting them; so you understand each other."

The morning sun rose bright after the storm of the night before, and as Charles walked about his father's garden, every thing seemed so fresh and beautiful, that it appeared to him that he had never looked upon so lovely a place as the Valley of Daisies, and that no people could be happier than its inhabitants.

"Here let me live, here let me die," said he, "for here alone my heart can know that peace which will insure its happiness."

He was delighted with all the arrangements which had been made during his absence; yet as

he wandered towards the cluster of lilies of the valley, and bent over them, he heaved a deep sigh, and said,—

"It can never be; I must conquer this, and remember that there is much for me to do; my books must be my companions, and I must devote myself to them, without even hoping for a nearer and dearer tie." Yet a faint hope still lingered in his heart, and as he placed a stalk of lilies in his vest, he could not avoid saying, "Who knows, who knows what may come?"

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

"There's nae place like our ain home;
O, I wish that I was there!
There's nae home like our ain home,
To be met wi' any where!
And O that I were back again
'Mid a' our flowers sae green,
An' heard the sang o' my *ain ones*,
An' was what I hae been!"

"Sister, forget you the home of our youth,
Where we first lisped prayers of hope, of truth;
Where the wild flowers wreathed our cottage o'er,
And the fields their brightest colors wore;
Where the blithe birds' sweetest murmur awoke,
In the waving boughs of our own loved oak?
That, *that* is our home."

SWIFTLY sped the vacation, amid the sunny smiles of friends and all the charms which *home* could offer to our young students. Pleasant were the walks which they took among those

old trees, every branch of which seemed familiar to them. The clear, rippling brook laughed on in its gladness, uttering such music as the friends declared none other could send forth. Those were joyous hours, and there were glad hearts around those cottage hearthstones. The parting hour, however, came at last, and again Charles and Arthur took their seats in the same stage coach which had before conveyed them to H.

Years passed on, and but few changes took place in the valley. The widow Lawton was called to her rest just before the young men graduated. She was gathered like "a shock of corn fully ripe;" "she died calmly, for she had heaven in view." Mrs. Burton was with her when she passed away from earth, and so sweetly did the lone widow fall asleep, that her death was scarcely perceptible. Many mourned her departure, for to many had she been the sympathizing friend and the efficient comforter. Her home and her purse were ever open to the

unfortunate, and sadly will she be missed by the widow and the fatherless. There are warm hearts still in the valley, however, who will do all in their power to supply her place. They laid her remains by the side of her child, in a lovely spot, where the winds of evening whisper a sweet requiem 'mid the pines which she and her daughter so loved while on earth.

"'Twas sorrow that blanched her cheek
And clouded her gentle brow,
And she faded, the good and the meek;
She is free from all suffering now."

Goody Blake had also departed to a happier home, with almost her last breath uttering a message of love for her favorite, whom she was very desirous of seeing; but she said, "Dear boy, we shall meet in heaven, where the shrivelled hand which he has so often grasped on earth will be changed, as I shall there put on a more glorious body."

It had been unusually healthy in the valley for the year, and Annette wrote to Arthur,—

"All is as when you left; the 'dark messenger' has kept aloof from our valley, and health and happiness seem every where to prevail. Mr. Crawford has constant applications for admission to his school which he is obliged to refuse. He was here last evening, and was so delightful in conversation that the hours passed like minutes. Since his eyesight was restored, he is a different man; previous to that, you know, he was at times quite reserved; but now he is the most cheerful, animated person I ever saw. Nothing is too small or too inferior for him to notice, and he sees beauties in every thing, from the tiniest flower to the noble oak which seems to pierce the skies. 'Sadness,' said he to me the other day, 'sadness should never dwell in the heart of any one whom God has placed upon this beautiful earth; if he will only seek it, there is joy every where. Even the loss of friends, if viewed in its proper light, is cause for rejoicing; for have they not gone home, where sorrow never comes, and

where flowers immortal bloom, fadeless, and O how fair! how gloriously tinted! In my dreams I see them and walk among them, inhaling their fragrance and watching their development.' There is a freshness and beauty in Mr. Crawford's thoughts which I have never observed before. His pupils are much attached to him, and we hear golden opinions of his school from all quarters.

"Cyril Thornton has decided, as you supposed he would, to become a lawyer, and he is so conscientious that we have no doubt he will be an honest one; he will reside in the city, for he could hardly find any thing to do in our valley. Dr. Lawrence was here yesterday to inquire for you under his favorite name, Cheerful Heart. 'Tell him from me,' said he, 'that he must not make up his mind with regard to a profession until he sees me, as I am determined that he shall take my place, for I am now too old to practise, and the villagers will have nobody else unless Arthur will turn doctor. Strange

that they should fancy me, but there is no accounting for tastes.' Little Netty Thornton, my namesake, has taken the place on earth of the sweet Sophia in heaven, and bids fair to resemble her sister in person and mind. Tell Charles that mother sends her love, and hopes he will not change his mind with regard to his choice of a profession. Old Dr. Landon, our minister, fails rapidly, and would be glad of a colleague; and he told mother, the other day, that it was the earnest desire of his heart, that Charles should take his place when he slept with his fathers. I write this, my dear Arthur, at mother's request. Mrs. Afton is well, and sends much love to you both. She wishes me to say, that Charles's rosebush is now full of buds and blossoms. But what a long letter I am writing! but you, I know, will not weary of it, as it is from your affectionate sister.

"Monday, 9th. I again open my letter, my dear Arthur, to tell you the good news. We have just received a letter from grandmother

Ladoni, which says that she has lost her old and faithful servant, and wishes to die in the arms of her child ; and notwithstanding her years, she will take passage in the next vessel which comes to D., and in a few months we may hope to see her. Mother is so happy at this unexpected news, that tears of joy are now streaming down her cheeks as I read the letter to her. Only two weeks more and you will be with us, and then for delightful walks and heart-communings. Adieu. NETTY."

From Annette's letter our readers will learn much that had taken place in the valley during Arthur's absence. The young men returned at the expected time, and were received with a delight which was not to be damped by the prospect of their again being so long away from home. Arthur, after thinking over the matter, and finding that it would fully coincide with the wishes of his friends, decided to study with Dr. Lawrence, and to attend medical lectures

at D.; this would preclude the necessity of his boarding away from his loved home in the valley, which had become, if possible, more dear to him than ever. When the villagers learned that he was about preparing to take Dr. Lawrence's place, they were reconciled to that gentleman's retiring from his labors, particularly as he promised always to consult with his favorite, Arthur, as long as he retained his faculties. Charles's choice is also made, and the announcement of it is received by his friends with almost as much joy as was the decision of Arthur. "Who," said they, "is so well fitted to break to us the bread of life as one who was born among us, and who has been with us in joy and in sorrow?" And truly, Charles had chosen wisely, for few were better calculated to fill the responsible office of teacher to the flock in the valley. When his mother learned his decision, tears flowed down her cheeks; and as she affectionately clasped him to her heart, she said, "O my son, this is what I have so ardently prayed for, and

you have made my heart to sing for joy." At first Charles had had some doubts with regard to his choice; but as soon as it was made, these all disappeared, and cheerfully he commenced his preparation, and ardently he pursued his theological studies, feeling anxious to begin the work which he felt assured it was appointed him on High to do. There was a theological seminary only a few miles from his home, so that he was enabled to spend most of his nights at his father's; the walk was a delightful recreation to him, and was conducive to the health of his body as well as to that of his mind. His course through the seminary was very pleasant; and having won golden opinions from the fathers in the ministry, he commenced his work. He received a unanimous call, and was ordained over the society which the aged and excellent Dr. Landon delightedly vacated in his behalf.

"I leave in my place," said he to his people, "one every way worthy and competent to fill it.

His heart is in his work, and he will, I am assured, do it well. God has called him to the ministry, and he will teach him how to dispense the word to his people; if you receive it aright, his blessing will follow; therefore look to it that ye hold up your pastor's hands."

It was spring, that season of bright skies and blossoming trees, when the soft green grass lifts itself above the ground which has so long been covered with its snowy mantle, when the sweet violet, one of Nature's favorites, raises its perfumed blossom above the dark earth; that season when the melodies of the birds are so sweet, and when the whole earth is robed in beauty and freshness. It is May, and the pastor is about taking possession of the home which his people have provided for him; and O, how pretty it is! with its simple and unpretending style of architecture. It is not a cottage, for the inhabitants of the valley are beginning to think that good chambers are a matter of much importance, for their physician

has told them so ; and as high chambers are more beneficial to health than low ones, of course the pastor's home must be made as comfortable as possible. "For surely," said one of his deacons, "we wish to keep him in good health, for then he can perform his duties better ; and who minds the little difference in the cost when it is for one we love so well?" So the parsonage was built two stories in height. It was placed in a sheltered nook, which some one had heard the pastor say, one day, was just the loveliest spot in the valley, and as he loved trees so well, not one of the natural growth had been felled. Choice flowers were scattered here and there, not forgetting his favorite lily of the valley. Roses and climbing vines were trained over the piazza, and, in short, "nothing," as Charles said, "which affection could bring or taste suggest was forgotten." And, truly, that parsonage would have attracted the attention of even the most indifferent passer by, and would have given him a favorable opinion of both minister and people.

But the arrangements at the parsonage, perfect as they seem to be, are not yet quite complete. "What can be wanting?" perhaps some reader will say; and we will answer their question by asking another. "What is a parsonage without a mistress? and what can a young minister do without a helpmate to assist him in every good word and work?" This question has been agitated in another quarter, and that kind friend who has been a second mother to Charles has put it directly to him. With a mother's quick perception, she long ago penetrated her daughter's secret, and realizing the feelings of Charles, who was so modest and humble that he feared to ask for Annette's hand, lest he should meet with a refusal, Mrs. Burton, with much delicacy, led her young friend to open his heart to her, and with Arthur's full approbation and the blessing of the parents on both sides, Annette and Charles plighted their troth to each other.

"Take her, Charles," said Mrs. Burton; "I do not fear to trust you. She is young, but she

is, I hope, a cheerful, earnest Christian. She will not start back from the trials which are the lot of all in this life, but will uncomplainingly bear them with you."

"O, how much do I owe you, my second mother!" said Charles: "although words are inadequate to express my feelings, yet my future conduct will, I trust, prove how much I prize the treasure you have confided to my care."

It was a lovely day in June, bright, leafy June, when Charles and Annette knelt in front of the altar in the church of which the venerable and excellent Dr. Landon had so long been the pastor, to pronounce their nuptial vows. The depth of feeling with which the aged clergyman spoke, as he repeated, "What God has joined together let not man put asunder," caused many a tear to fall from eyes all unused to weep; and as the sweet bride turned from the altar, leaning upon the arm of him whom she had chosen, many a hand was held out to grasp hers, and many a silent blessing was bestowed from warm hearts

upon herself and husband. The pretty parsonage is no longer without a mistress, or the young minister without a wife; so the wishes of kind friends in this respect are fulfilled. Annette is delighted with all the arrangements, and her heart overflows with regard for a people who have so generously ministered to the every wish and need of their pastor and his wife.

"It appears, dear Charles," said the young wife, as she looked at the garden, laid out with so much taste, and at the house, so convenient and pretty, "as if they had known exactly what we liked, and had determined that no desire should be ungratified."

Years wore away, and they were happy years in the Valley of Daisies. Charles Afton's people had not been disappointed in their chosen pastor, and he was "not without honor even in his own country," although but little knowledge of his excellence had reached the world beyond. His character was fully appreciated by his beloved parishioners and by his own family. To

live within the sphere of such a man's influence, and to witness the constant exercise of his virtues, is, indeed, a privilege, and his people felt it as such. His heart was entirely devoted to the faithful discharge of his duties. His messages from the sacred desk were full of earnestness and power, and the deep love for them evidenced in his voice and manner, when he exhorted his people to persevere in the paths of peace, evinced how ardently he desired what would be for their best good. He visited among them frequently, and whenever he came, the joy manifested by parents and children showed that they both respected and loved him. Annette proved herself every way worthy to be, as she was, the cherished companion of such a man. She entered with interest into all his feelings and pursuits, and by the kindness prompted by the dictates of her own gentle heart, she won the love of all her husband's parishioners. No child in the valley that did not take delight in a call from their pastor's wife, for she listened patiently to

their little trials, and pointed out the remedy in a manner adapted to their comprehension.

But to return to our friends at the cottage. Arthur (or the doctor, as we must now call him, for he has taken his degree some months since, and is in full practice) is just at this time intently engaged, every moment which he can spare, in overseeing the building of quite an extensive addition to his mother's cottage, which is in future to be only an L to the main building. The old doctor comes over every day, and appears to be as much interested in what is going on as his friend, Cheerful Heart. And now he is giving directions as if he really had a right to a voice in the matter; and if we observe still closer, we shall see that the carpenters follow his directions, while the young M. D. looks on smilingly and approvingly, as if quite satisfied that all will be right. There certainly is a mystery in this, which we will try to solve for the benefit of our readers, who probably have some curiosity with regard to the affair. Well, in

order to do this, we must take you, gentle questioner, into Mrs. Burton's parlor for a few moments; we will not detain you long, only to introduce you to a young dark-eyed lady, with whose raven curls a little chubby-faced girl is playing, who calls Annette Afton mother. Now, this young lady with the curls bears a very striking resemblance to Dr. Lawrence; and if you observe, you will hear her call that gentleman father, as she affectionately leans upon his arm, and goes out with him to look at the progress of the new building. But why does the rich color deepen in her cheek, and the light brighten in her eye, as young Dr. Burton approaches? Ah! you have guessed our secret, we think; but if not, we will tell you what it is. In his frequent visits to the doctor's, Arthur had learned more than was in his medical books; he had learned to love the daughter of his respected friend, and the good doctor had readily acquiesced in an arrangement which would unite the two whom he loved best on

earth; and this is why he is building "a cage for his birds," as he calls the house, which he insisted upon erecting for his Mary and Arthur to dwell in; and as Mrs. Burton's house is not large enough for all, and she wishes to have her son with her, they are to occupy the new home together. One evening, just as the house was finished and furnished in accordance with the taste of the gentle being who is soon to be its mistress, and who in her own glad tones, whose music thrills the heart of the chosen one on whose arm she is leaning, is saying, "All is perfect, dear father, and you, Arthur, have forgotten nothing," she is interrupted by the rattling of the stage coach up the quiet street.

"Who can have come, Arthur?" said she. "Are you expecting any one at this time?"

"No, Mary; but doubtless it is some friend whom we shall welcome to our bridal."

"That is to be a very quiet affair, you know, Arthur, as I dislike bustle and confusion at such times, and I have your promise and your moth-

er's that none but our friends in the valley shall be present."

"As you will, Mary; but let us see who has arrived."

As they entered the parlor, they saw before them a lady of dignified and commanding bearing, clasped in Mrs. Burton's arms. She was about sixty years of age, but her fine figure was still unbent, and the fire of her dark eye still unquenched. There was firmness expressed in her small mouth, but there was a world of love in the whole face, which at once took the heart captive, and won the regard of all on whom she chose to bestow her smiles.

"This is, this must be our dear grandmother, whom we have so long expected, and for whose coming we have so ardently longed," said Arthur. "Welcome, thrice welcome, to our homes and hearts; equally welcome in each of them, dear grandmother. You have arrived at just the right moment, and our timid Mary will not object, I am sure, to your being present when

another will have the right to call you parent."

Madam Ladoni — for it was she — arose and embraced her grandson and the blushing being by his side, and with tones whose melody was not injured by a slight foreign accent, responded with great affection to Arthur's words.

"And this, then, is Arthur; but you are no stranger to me, my child, for your mother's letters and your own have made me acquainted with your inner self. But where is Annette, the sweet childlike girl, whose purity of feeling spoke in every line of her welcome letters?"

"She will be here immediately, dear mother, with her husband and child. We have sent for her, and she will come on the wings of love to see you, for much she has wept the 'hope deferred' of your coming, and anxiously has she studied the papers to find some cause for the detention of the vessel in which you were to sail."

"You received my letter, of course, and that

solved the mystery of our not coming," said Madam Ladoni.

"No, mother," replied Mrs. Burton, "we have not heard from you for long weeks, and have been extremely anxious; Arthur has made every inquiry in his power with regard to the vessel in which you were to take passage, and his cheering words alone prevented me from being really unhappy on your account. He always sees a 'silver lining to every cloud,' however, and possesses the power, as I have so often written you, of imparting his hopefulness to all around him."

"I see," said Madam Ladoni, "that I must, then, as this is the case, render an account of myself; and I will not keep you longer in suspense. We sailed at the time I wrote you. For several days we had fine weather, and got on charmingly; but a storm arose, and we were in great danger; but fortunately we were able to get into a port, from whence I wrote you, and as there was no other vessel to sail for the

season, and winter was approaching, I decided to remain there until the vessel was repaired, or another should start for this country. As I had written you the particulars of our detention, I did not apprehend that you would be anxious, and therefore felt no fears on your account."

"I am glad, dear mother, that we did not receive the letter, for I should have been in a constant state of alarm, as we have had such severe storms the past season, and so many vessels have been lost. But, thank Heaven, you are with us now, never more to leave us. But here are Annette and Charles, with their little one."

O, those were joyous days in the valley, not only to those immediately concerned, but all the villagers rejoiced in the happiness of those whom they loved so well, and grandmother Ladoni very soon felt perfectly at home in their midst, declaring that she was willing to end her days in the loveliest spot on earth next to her

own Italy, and by the side of her own glorious Bay of Naples.

In one week after Madam Ladoni's arrival, Arthur was married to the bride of his choice, and all said, as they looked upon her bright, pure face, that she was a fit companion even for their doctor, and would with him always find a 'silver lining to every cloud;' and so it proved, for during the long life which she spent with him in their midst, she was a very angel to her husband, and she had not an enemy or a cold friend in the world. And here we must leave them, happy in each other, and sympathizing in every good word and work.

Once more Mrs. Burton was called to mourn; once more the family tomb in the cemetery was opened to receive a beloved friend; but—

"That was a mother's grave; weep not for her;
She has a rich reward in heaven. She sank
Honored and full of years. And many friends
Stood round her grave; and 'twas their kindly hands
That trimmed the daisied turf and cropped the boughs,
That the blessed sunbeams might stream freely down
Upon her verdant bed. Weep not for her."

The beloved pastor still leads his flock by the side of the still waters, and points out to them the way to heaven. His wife "reposes beneath his protecting tenderness, walking in the light of his talents and piety in confiding happiness, seeming almost unconscious of a separate being."

The good old doctor still lives, retaining his faculties perfectly, and never seeming so happy as when surrounded by the children of his Mary and Annette, stoutly declaring that each is equally dear to him.

Mr. Afton has for years led a most exemplary life; he has become wealthy, and is universally respected, not on account of his prosperity, for "money does not make the man" in the Valley of Daisies, but for the excellence of his character, and for the example which he sets to his neighbors. His wife is a healthy and happy woman, and the now aged pair never cease to attribute all that they are, and all that they have, under Heaven, to the exertions and efforts of Arthur Burton in their behalf.

It is whispered in the valley that a double wedding is soon to take place between Mr. Crawford and Mrs. Burton, and our friend Robert and a modest, retiring little lady, who fully appreciates his many good qualities. The last mentioned wedding is certainly to come off soon; but as for the first, time will show. When the young doctor is questioned about the matter, he only smiles, and says, "Mr. Crawford is already as dear as a father to me, and it will not make much difference in my feelings if the two best friends I have in the world are united by a closer tie."

And now, gentle reader, we must close our story, and, simple though it be, if by it any one is taught to cultivate a cheerful spirit like Arthur's, and to imitate his active virtues, — never forgetting that "there is" certainly "a silver lining to every cloud," if they will only look for it, — our end will be attained, and we shall not have labored in vain.

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